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POLL RESULTS

Do you think the CNMI government should absorb every one of the workers in Immigration who would be replaced under federalization?

Yes-30

No-48

No opinion-6

Sunday, December 21, 2008

83 without a government budget for DAYS FY 2009

INSIDE



New, 'Old' Shop

A quaint, little store peddling antique and artsy stuff has recently opened on the first floor of the Marianas Business Plaza.

Life & Style...Page 18

Retirement Fund chair says bailout bill will kill Fund. **PAGE 2**
No bail for Rota Mayor's son after 2 federal offenses. **PAGE 6**

Asiana upbeat about Osaka-Saipan flight

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Asiana Airlines' thrice-weekly Osaka-Saipan service got off to a fine start over the weekend with the inaugural flight nearly full.

Kwang Joong Kim, regional sales general manager of Asiana Airlines, said a total of 170 pas-

See ASIANA on Page 4

MARK RABAGO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, sixth from left, joins the chief pilot, lead stewardess, and Kumho Asiana officials, led by regional sales general manager Kwang Joong Kim, in posing for the camera after the arrival of the inaugural Osaka-Saipan flight early Saturday morning at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport.



Motor City's woes extend beyond auto industry

RELATED NEWS

- Automakers grab loans, look to Obama White House
- Canada offers \$3.29 billion auto bailout

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By DAVID CRARY and COREY WILLIAMS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

DETROIT (AP)—One measure of how tough times are in the Motor City: Some of the offenders in jail don't want to be released; some who

See MOTOR on Page 4

Laolao Bay unveils new clubhouse

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Saipan LauLau Development last Fri-

day inaugurated the new clubhouse for its \$60-million Golftel Development Project at Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

No less than Gov. Benigno R. Fitial



See LAOLAO on Page 4

Fr. Manny Corcueria blesses the new Laolao Bay Golf Resort clubhouse as Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Senate President Pete Reyes, House Speaker Arnold Palacios, and Kumho Asiana officials, led by Kumho Resort president Bong Ko Kim, look on.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New adjusted power rate is 23 cents per kWh

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public Utilities Commission Friday

night unanimously voted and adopted the new adjusted power rate of \$0.22989 per kilowatt hour.

The new rate will go into effect Jan. 1

and will last for three months.

PUC voted to implement a levelized energy adjustment clause, or LEAC,

See NEW on Page 4



Local

Retirement Fund chair says bailout bill will kill Fund

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund board of trustees chair Juan T. Guerrero said a bill that was introduced Friday in the House that seeks to provide a one-time bailout of gov-

ernment obligations to the Fund by allowing eligible government employees to retire "will kill the Fund basically."

Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* that House Bill 16-201's intention is to reduce and save money for the government, but then "throw the money back at

the Retirement."

Guerrero said the legislation will provide for two years credit to those who are intending to retire.

"Right now the government owes a lot of money to the Retirement. They're coming up with another bill that would

place another burden on top of what is owed," he said.

The chairman pointed out that it is a good gesture to get the government out by about 300 employees.

"But when the bill fails to address the funding source it's a useless bill itself," he said.

H.B. 16-201 introduced by Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider and seven other lawmakers, seeks to establish a government service severance package for employees funded by the general fund with at least 18 years of government service.

The legislation proposes to

reserve \$7 million from the Fund to pay for the government service severance package.

The bill states that as many as 300 government employees are now eligible to retire but will not be permitted to retire until the government pays its contribution to the Fund.

"Based on current financial figures, the Commonwealth government is barely making payroll and vendor payments, and will not be in a position to continue operating at its current level for long, which will lead inevitably to terminations thereby putting some long term government employees at risk of losing their jobs," Hofschneider said in the bill.

But Guerrero said he doesn't know what's the real purpose of the legislation.

"It is political? Or common sense? If they are going to require the Retirement to shoulder the expense at this stage with the market crisis, it's not going to be possible," Guerrero said.

The chairman said they will submit their comments to the House.

"We need to be realistic on what the Retirement can do without appropriate funding at this point," he added.

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MOTOR*From Page 1*

do get out promptly re-offend to head back where there's heat, health care and three meals a day.

"For the first time, I'm seeing guys make a conscious decision they'll be better off in prison than in the community, homeless and hungry," said Joseph Williams of New Creations Community Outreach, which assists ex-offenders. "In prison they've got three hots and a cot, so they commit a crime to go back in and come out when times are better."

For now, better times seem distant. Even with no hurricane or other natural disaster to blame, Detroit has—by many measures—replaced New Orleans as America's most beleaguered city.

The jobless rate has climbed past 21 percent, the embattled school district just fired its superintendent, tens of thousands of homes and stores are derelict and abandoned, the ex-mayor is in jail for a text-messaging sex scandal. Even the pro football team is a pathetic joke—the Lions are within two losses of an unprecedented 0-16 season.

And overarching these and many other woes is the near-collapse of the U.S. auto industry, Detroit's vital source of jobs and status for more than a century.

"We're the Motor City," said Scott Alan Davis, who oversees community development projects in one of the worst-hit neighborhoods. "When the basis for that name collapses, that's started to scare people."

Among the worried is 81-year-old Warlena McDuell, a retired surgical technician who shares a home with her cancer-stricken daughter. On a recent weekday, she was among hundreds of Detroiters, most of them elderly, filling orange-plastic grocery carts at a food bank run by Focus:HOPE, a local nonprofit.

LAOLAO*From Page 1*

Asiana, which after acquiring the sprawling Kagman property in Feb. 28, 2007, has become one of the islands' anchor investors.

"I call on all of our elected officials to renew their commitment to this company, which has committed so much investment capital and flight capacity to the CNMI for so many years, during both bull and bear markets. Few other investors can produce the synergy, value, and integration that this group brings to this project and to the people of the CNMI. Here, with this project and investment commitment, we will

"It's a depression—not a recession," McDuell said, with the authority of someone who has lived through both. "It will get worse before it gets better."

Behind her in line, stocking up on canned apple juice and fruit cocktail, was Benjamin Smith, 77, who once held jobs with Uniroyal and Chrysler. Maneuvering his cart slowly, one hand gripping a cane, he was unable to muster much cheer when someone extended holiday good wishes.

"How are we going to do well?" he replied. "Everything's busted up."

Focus:HOPE's food program serves 41,000 people a month; manager Frank Kubik estimates that's only half the number of Detroiters in need of the assistance.

"It's not going to be a nice Christmas for a lot of folks," he said.

DeWayne Wells, president of Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan, said demand is up by 25 percent from a year ago in the region's food banks as auto-industry layoffs multiply.

"Many people are first-timers—they have no idea how to navigate the system, how to qualify for food stamps," Wells said. "Last year, some were donors—now they're clients."

■ ■ ■

The roots of Detroit's current plight go back decades. Court-ordered school busing and the 12th Street riots of 1967 accelerated an exodus of whites to the suburbs, and many middle-class blacks followed, shrinking the city's population from a peak of 1.8 million in the 1950s to half that now.

About 83 percent of the current population is African-American; of cities with more than 100,000 people, only Gary, Ind., had a higher percentage in the latest census.

Detroit's crime, poverty, unemployment and school dropout rates are among the worst of any major U.S. city. The bus system is widely panned;

car and home insurance rates are high. Chain grocery stores are absent, forcing many Detroiters to rely on high-priced corner stores.

"There's always been a real can-do spirit among our people," said the Rev. Edgar Vann, pastor of Second Ebenezer Church. "That's being beaten down right now. ... These times, unlike others, have sapped a lot of that spirit from them."

Vann, in addition to overseeing a

5,000-member megachurch, founded the Vanguard Community Development Corp., which under Scott Alan Davis's leadership is building scores of new homes and offering education programs in the blighted North End.

One apartment complex, for the elderly, is rising barely a block from two grade schools recently abandoned by the city, and now sitting empty and ransacked.

"It's death to the neighborhood," said Vann, some anger in his voice,

as he gestured to homes that had been abandoned and vandalized since the schools closed.

He worries that despair and frustration may take a toll as Detroiters see more manufacturing jobs vanish and get no short-term answer when they ask, "What next?"

"Somebody needs to hear us before we begin to see a rise of social upheaval," Vann said. "I hate to say that. It's a God-forbid reality."

NEW*From Page 1*

which will be set every six months on April 1 and Oct. 1. The LEAC will replace the fluctuating monthly electric rate that CUC set every month based on the price of oil.

The new rate is approximately two cents higher than CUC's December rate, but considerably lower than the all time high of \$0.413 per kWh set in the summer. The LEAC is only one component of each utility bill. Custom-

LEAC Timeline**Jan. 1**

The new adjusted rate of \$0.22989 will go into effect for three months.

Jan. 16

CUC must petition PUC for approval of the Commonwealth Development Authority stock transaction.

Before Feb. 1

CUC must report why it was unable to meet the renewable energy portfolio standard mandated by public law.

March

PUC will hold a regulatory session, during which the hearing examiner will conduct a public workshop.

By March 13

CUC and Georgetown must develop and file a proposal for a new six-month rate which will go into effect April 1.

April 1

A new six-month LEAC rate will be implemented.

ers also must pay the base rate, which changes depending on the amount of usage. For residential customers using less than 500 kWhs, the base rate is \$0.016. So those customers will pay the LEAC and the base rate for a total of \$0.24589 per kilowatt hour.

PUC hired the Georgetown Consultant Group to investigate and prepare testimony for the rate review. Georgetown has worked with the Guam Power Authority, which according to Georgetown, has used the LEAC successfully for the past 12 years.

The LEAC is based on a formula using four factors. Three factors are totaled: the projected fuel expense for the coming LEAC period; the difference between the fuel revenue and actual fuel expenses as approved by the PUC; and refunds or credits from the supplier, excluding legal settlements. Those factors are divided by the projected retail kilowatt-hours for the next six months to develop the LEAC rate.

During Friday's meeting at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, PUC also adopted several other orders, including that CUC can petition for an emergency change in the LEAC if the utility agency reaches a threshold of \$350,000 in fuel expenses during a LEAC period. Several deadlines were set as well. (*see chart*)

CUC executive director Antonio Muna said he was pleased with the outcome and appreciates the PUC and Georgetown

Adjusted power rate breakdown

- \$0.17502 or 76 percent will go toward fuel costs; lubrication costs; transportation and handling costs; and taxes and other costs as billed by the fuel supplier.
- \$0.01799 or 8 percent will go toward building a 30-day fuel inventory supply.
- \$0.00615 or 3 percent will cover PUC fees and expenses for technical expertise to continue the implementation of the LEAC tariff.
- \$0.03074 or 13 percent will help fund a reserve to support power generation measures.

Consultants recognition of CUC's need to reverse its financial condition.

But, he said, "this doesn't solve everything over night. Nor is this a free ride as well."

PUC expects results from CUC, he added.

At the meeting, the Commissioners also voted to eliminate the contract ceiling that had been in place for the Georgetown Consultants and hearing examiner Harry Boertzel.

The move is necessary, PUC chairperson Viola Alepuoy said, because there are still many things that need to be done in regards to CUC's power generation, as well as the water and waste water aspect.

PUC was tasked with reviewing and setting new power rates for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. before Dec. 31, 2008—the deadline set by law—or CUC would be forced to roll back rates to 17 cents per kWh.

accomplish its objective of making Saipan a premiere golf destination in Micronesia but the entire Pacific as well.

Also present during the ribbon-cutting ceremony were Senate President Pete Reyes, House Speaker Arnold Palacios, Cabinet officials, and other VIPs from the local business and Korean communities.

The Golftel Development Project originally was pegged at \$68 million, but the global recession and the decreasing value of the won, prompted Saipan LauLau to scale back the project by \$8 million.

From an original July 1, 2009 completion date, the Golftel project is also now penciled to be finished by the end of next year.

ASIANA*From Page 1*

have a convergence of unparalleled flight service, exceptional resort accommodations, and world class recreational golfing opportunities. Given the current global financial climate, now is not the time for our leaders to waiver or be timid in their support for a committed anchor investor," he said.

Kumho Resort president Bong Ko Kim seconded the governor's call for support of his company and its investment, even quoting from the famed Greek storyteller Aesop.

"We are now in the midst of a global economic phenomenon, with effects reaching far beyond what the world has ever seen before. Now, more than ever, is the time for us to link hands and persevere, most importantly, together. As

the great slave from ancient Greece Aesop taught through his fables, 'United we stand, divided we fall,'" he said.

Kumho Resort is the local subsidiary of Kumho Asiana and own Saipan LauLau.

Fitial, for his part, pledged his administration's continued support for Kumho Asiana's \$60-million Golftel Development Project. He added that he already is looking forward to the project's success in the years ahead.

"If this golf resort succeeds, as I fully expect it will, the CNMI will also experience success and benefit from the success of this multi-million dollar venture. The project's success, however, is a long-term undertaking, one that will be fully realized beyond the immediate financial volatility in to-

day's world markets."

According to Saipan LauLau president Yun Kim the new clubhouse actually is an extension of the old one and incorporates a customer lounge, a reception counter, a pro shop, a golf cart storage, and the facility's operations department.

He said the old clubhouse now houses the Crystal View Restaurant and a renovated starter area.

Other additions to Laolao Bay include a new tee-house overlooking East No. 4 Green, No. 5 Fairway, and the picturesque LauLau Bay. The facility also has 90 brand new environmentally friendly electric golf carts.

Yun Kim said with these new facilities and renovations to old structures, Laolao Bay would not only be able to ac-

sengers disembarked from the 177-seat Airbus plane that touched down on time at 2:20am early Saturday morning at the Francisco M. Palacios-Saipan International Airport.

Kim and other Asiana officials joined Gov. Benigno R. Fitial in welcoming the tourists from Japan.

Fitial said the more than 95 percent load factor is a good sign for the service, which brings the number of Asiana weekly flights to the Commonwealth to 21.

"This means Saipan is getting very busy because of the season. A lot of

Asian visitors are coming to Saipan because of the weather. I woke up at 1am to welcome passengers of the inaugural flight. I'm very much committed not only to Asiana but to our visitor industry in general. I really want to see more people come here because this would really help the CNMI tourism industry.

The CNMI chief executive personally handed a bouquet of flowers to the chief pilot and the head stewardess of the inaugural flight during a short welcome ceremony prepared by the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Kim, for his part, said the Osaka-Saipan flights—as well as the other 18 weekly flights Asiana is already servicing the CNMI, plus its Laolao Bay Golf Resort investment—only reaffirms his

company's commitment to the islands. "This is another Asiana service coming to the CNMI. Because of our Laolao Bay investment we inaugurated this flight. We hope we will bring a lot more Japanese tourists from Osaka. I'm very happy to have almost 95 percent load factor in the inaugural flight. We hope we do good," he said.

Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio was one of the passengers of the inaugural flight and seconded the governor's observation that winter in East Asia indeed has resulted in an influx of tourists to warmer destinations like Saipan.

"Weather was nice and cold in Osaka so I'm sure our guests will be pleasantly surprised about the warmth of

our island, considering its very cold in their country and that's part of attraction, that we are summer year round," he said.

Tenorio was also pleased with the success of the inaugural flight and is crossing his fingers that more good things will come from the service.

"Given the current economic situation I'm happy that the Osaka-Saipan inaugural flight had 170 passengers out of the 177 seats. Given for a lot of things, we're very grateful that this inaugural flight was well attended. We look forward to working together with Asiana to make sure this will be a successful route for them," he said.

MVA anticipates the service will bring more than 20,000 travelers—based on

531 seats per week—to the CNMI during its first year of operation.

Kumho Resort president Boong Koo Kim, meanwhile, said the onus is on them and the CNMI to continue to promote the service as well as the rest of the 18 Asiana flights to Saipan.

"We are happy about the inaugural flight and we need to continue to promote this service. We hope to get 70 percent seat occupancy in the service. The Laolao Development project is connected with our Asiana flights. Without the project we will not have that much services," he said.

The welcome ceremony also saw local girls garbed in traditional dress hand out leis to the flight's VIPs and shell necklaces to its passengers.

Italy's premiere beer launched in style

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Peroni Nastro Azzurro, Italy's premiere beer and one Europe's oldest, was launched in style among Saipan's beer enthusiasts last Friday night at Palms Resort Saipan.

The launching coincided with a fashion show as Jessica Rosa-



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Two of the models hold their bottle of Peroni Nastro Azzurro during the fashion show at Friday night at Palms Resort Saipan.

rio, sales and marketing manager of Mid-Pacific Distributors Guam/Pacific Trading Co., said the beer must always go with great style and fashion.

The models walked in their stylish clothing and Docomo cellular phones.

Rosario said the beer was also launched together with the Hyundai Genesis from Triple J Motors.

"It's style in a bottle, a cell-phone, and a brand new and stylish car," Rosario explained.

The beer was also launched with tasteful food.

"The Peroni is always associated with a clean and stylish beer," she said.

PTC general manager Charles

Cepeda was glad to see a huge crowd during the launching.

"It's nice. We have an excellent turnout," he said.

The crowd included government officials and business leaders.

"We have a very successful evening. We accomplished what we wanted to achieve. As you can see we have stylish food that complements the Peroni," said Glen Hunter, also of PTC.

Hunter said the fashion show that went with the launching was actually meant to discover the meaning of style.

"It was beyond our expectations. We have a perfect crowd tonight and they enjoyed our great food as well as the great beer and wines."

PTC also launched two wines—Nottage Hill and Kendall-Jackson—at the Hyatt Regency Saipan Thursday night.

The Peroni beer along with Nottage Hill and Kendall-Jackson wines are now available in selected outlets.

The pale lager is a light-straw colored. It tastes light grains along with some nuts and

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
One of the Peroni models shows off her stylish dress from Pena House Boutique.

some crisp hops.

It has also some fruit sensations, especially when the beer begins to warm.

But it is always good to drink it when it is cold. Its alcohol level is 4.7 percent by volume.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
Guests enjoy the newly launched Italian beer Peroni Nastro Azzurro

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

Pacific Trading Co. management pose with government officials and other guests during the launching of Peroni beer at the Palms Resort Friday night.

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Report immediately to Marianas Eye Institute, Monday to Friday 8AM - 5PM or Saturday 9AM to 1PM. Marianas Eye Institute is located on Beach Road, Garapan across 13 Fishermen Monument. Tel. 235-9090. Deadline extensions available.

CITING STEEP DECREASE IN NEW CAR SALES

Yumul files bill to help auto dealers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Rep. Ray N. Yumul introduced on Friday a bill that will help automobile dealers in the CNMI which have been experiencing steep decrease in new automobile sales over the past few years.

Yumul's Bill 16-203 seeks to amend the Commonwealth Code to allow automobile dealers to pay excise taxes on the importation of new vehicles upon first sale or distribution in the CNMI.

"They (auto dealers) are asking for momentary relief so that we can allow them to bring it (new vehicle) put it out for sale and when it does sale that's when we collect the excise tax

and then of course the business groups revenue tax will be collected after these vehicles are sold," Yumul, who chairs the House's Committee on Ways and Means, told *Saipan Tribune*.

The lawmaker said his legislation does not impact the general fund when it comes to taxes because he is not saying that the government will not collect the taxes.

"We do have a program right now which is called a Bonded Warehouse Program where cigarettes and other high value items like luxury goods can be brought into the Commonwealth. Taxes will not be collected but they (high value

items) have to be kept in a secured facility..." Yumul said.

"So that is really the angle we're looking at because auto dealers want to be able to have these items out for viewing for the customers," he said.

He stated in the bill that automobile dealers continue to experience difficulties due to the worsening economic conditions of the Commonwealth.

"The Legislature is cognizant of the situation that businesses are experiencing and is willing to accommodate their needs in order for them to stay in business," Yumul said.

Due to the decrease in new

automobile sales over the past few years, he said, auto dealers are having difficulties making timely payments on the required excise taxes and fees.

The lawmaker said allowing these dealers to pay excise taxes on the importation of new vehicles upon first sale or distribution in the CNMI rather than upon entry would greatly assist them in their efforts to provide greater services to NMI residents.

"Although, dealers are still required to pay excise taxes on such vehicles, they can pay the excise tax when a vehicle is first sold or distributed in the Commonwealth thereby giving such dealers more flexibility and time to generate the funds to make timely payments," he said.

No bail for Rota Mayor's son after 2 federal offenses

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the CNMI on Friday denied bail for Wilbur Vic Masga Inos, son of the Mayor of Rota, in connection with two counts of federal offense.

Inos, who was arrested by Police in August for an alleged robbery of a poker arcade on Rota, appeared in front of Chief Judge Alex Munson on Friday.

He pleaded not guilty.

But the court said Inos, 25, would remain in custody without bail.

He was earlier detained for robbery, assault with a dangerous weapon, and assault and posted \$75,000 bail for temporary release.

Munson ordered the jury trial at 9am on Feb. 17 but pretrial motions should be filed not later than Jan. 5.

Court record showed that a video was played on Friday to show the actual robbery.

Government witness special agent John Quintanilla appeared

along with defense witness Joe Masga Inos, brother of the defendant, who asked that the defendant be released on property bond and other conditions.

But the federal court argued again for "no bail."

The court said the defendant was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshall.

On Dec. 18, the grand jury charged Inos for unlawfully committing robbery by obtaining personal property from a person or in the presence of another against that person's will by means of actual or threatened force, violence or fear of injury to his person, and thereby obstructed delayed or affected commerce or the movement of any article or commodity in commerce, thus, he committed a federal offense known as the Hobbs Act Robbery.

The jury also charged that Inos did knowingly carry or use a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence for which he may be prosecuted in a court of the U.S., or knowingly possessed a firearm in furtherance of the crime in violation of federal laws.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Marianas High School schedule

Dec. 24-Jan. 2 No classes (Christmas break)
For questions and concerns contact 237-3206. (PR)

Kagman High calendar of activities

- Dec. 22 KHS accreditation team meets with BOE/COE
- Dec. 23 Christmas 2008 bash at the school campus, 6pm-10pm.
- Dec. 24 2008 to Jan. 4 2009: Christmas break
- Jan. 5 2009 Classes resume

Vendors sought for Puengin Inetnon

The Kagman Komunitat Association is looking for interested vendors to sell food, clothing, games, and other types of family oriented entertainment for "Puengin Inetnon."

"Puengin Inetnon" is Chamorro for "a night of gathering."

It will be similar to the Thursday Night Street Market in Garapan except that it will be held every government payday Friday at the Kagman Community Center. Interested vendors, volunteers, and performers may call the Kagman Post Office at 256-POST for more info. (PR)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

S.Y. Kim's Development Corp.

The public is invited to provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on Conditional Use Permit Application, No. 2008-2063, by S.Y. Kim's Development Corp. The application is for the warehousing of lube oil in Puerto Rico.

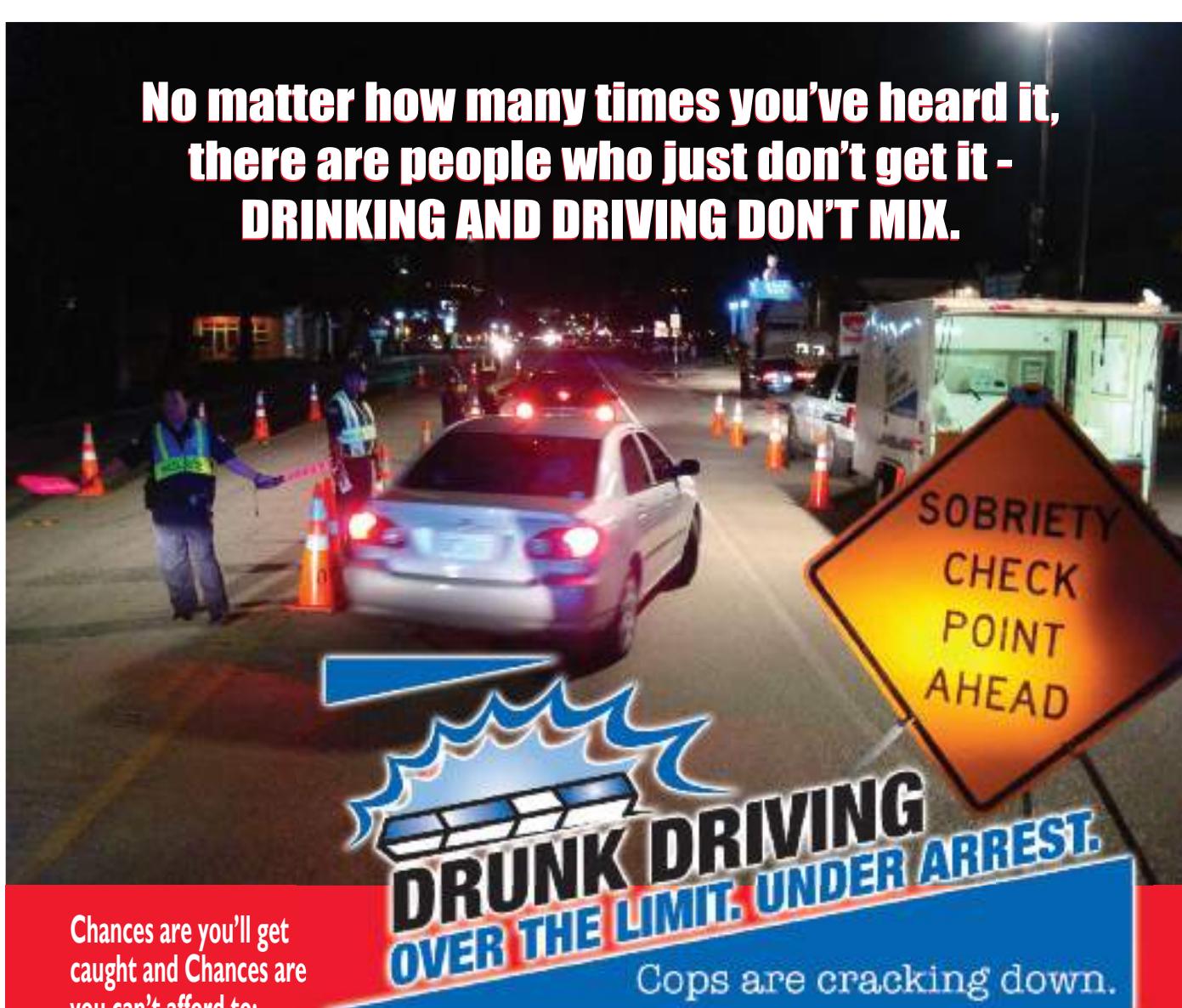
Date: January 05, 2009 (Monday)
Time: 6:30 pm
Place: Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan.

The conditional use application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may also be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30 pm, December 30, 2008. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese T. Oguromo, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Division 3 of Title 10 CMC).

/s/ Dr. Elizabeth D. Rechebei, Acting Chair.

No matter how many times you've heard it,
there are people who just don't get it -
DRINKING AND DRIVING DON'T MIX.



Chances are you'll get caught and Chances are you can't afford to:

WHAT THAT LAST DRINK CAN COST YOU:	
Vehicle towing and storage fee	\$ 100.00
Car insurance premium fee	\$ 1,300.00
DUI penalty fee	\$ 500.00
Reckless Driving	\$ 250.00
Court fee	\$ 100.00
DUI classes	\$ 100.00
Attorney fees	\$ 2,500.00
Community service	100 hrs.
Missed working days	3 days-1 month
TOTAL	\$ 4,850.00

Fee based on costs from various locations



Department of Public Safety
For more information
call 664-9084/85



Traders Insurance Co. supports local artist

Traders Insurance Co., one of the leading insurance companies in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, has extended its support to local artist Marconi Calindas.

Traders Insurance president Lito Mendoza and general manager Mike Licop led the unveiling of the 60X48, six-panel painting entitled "Sun Flower and Friends Series 2" by NMI registered artist Calindas last Dec. 19, at the Traders Insurance head office in Susupe.

The commissioned painting has been part of the company's project to support the local artists in the CNMI.

Mendoza said he is proud to acquire and display the artwork from Calindas. He added that he has been impressed with Calindas' unique style.

Christmas at Camp Hyatt starts today

Hyatt Regency Saipan is inviting kids who are 3-12 years old to join the annual Christmas at Camp Hyatt starting today, Dec. 22.

Team leader Vangie Sablan said the camp will run until Jan. 9 and sessions will be from 9am to 3pm.

Sablan said the camp this year planned different and numerous activities that will keep the kids busy for the entire Christmas break.

There will be three sessions for this event. The first week of the camp will run from Dec. 22 to 26.

The second session will be from Dec. 29 to Jan. 2 and the last session will be from Jan. 5 to 9.

The cost is \$30 for one day, \$115 for one week, \$200 for two weeks, and \$285 for the entire three weeks.

The cost will include lunch, certificate, activities, and field-

which he said, "brings a huge smile to everyone and lights up everyone's face. I believe in Marconi's artistic talent among so many."

He said he is hoping that the community will recognize the talents of the almost a hundred artists in the CNMI that have been trying to promote the local arts and culture.

"We hope that other establishments will also provide support to the local artists," he said.

Calindas' artwork has also been hailed by the Department of Public Health. The agency recently selected Calindas' artwork to be the cover of its 2008 Health Data Report, which will have a run of over 500 copies and distributed to other Pacific including Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa,

Federated States of Micronesia, and many others.

Public Health also recognized local artists in the CNMI during a media briefing held in early December 2008.

Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez earlier congratulated Calindas for his contributions to the national data report through his paintings. Three of Calindas' artwork were also included in the report. (PR)

Traders Insurance Co. president Lito Mendoza, left, shakes hands with NMI registered artist Marconi Calindas during the unveiling of the 60X48, six-panel painting at the Traders Insurance head office in Susupe last Friday.

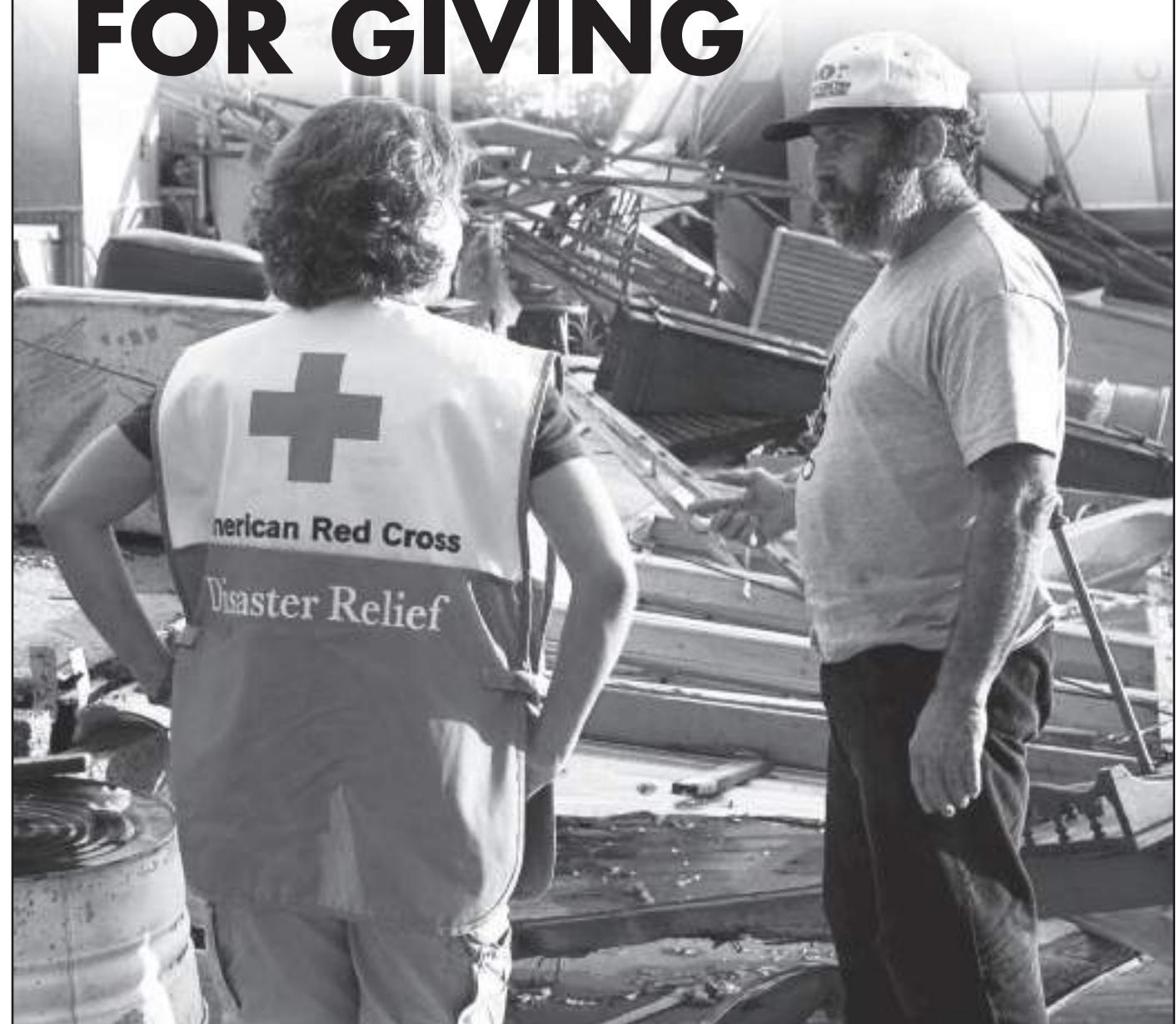
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



A PASSION FOR GIVING



American Red Cross



Shell Lucky 7 Passport
Don't gas up without it!



Fill-up at Shell through Dec 31st and share Shell's PASSION for giving to the Red Cross Northern Mariana Islands Chapter. A portion of your fuel purchase will be donated to the Red Cross to assist their efforts of providing assistance to our community. Redeem your Lucky 7 Passport and receive a FREE LED Flashlight. Fuel up with Shell V-Power premium gasoline and get Lucky 7 double stamps. Happy Holidays to you and your family from our family at Shell.

made to move



NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Monday, January 05, 2009 at 6:00 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Bldg., Saipan

- A. Preliminary Matters
 - 1. Call to Order
 - 2. Roll Call
 - 3. Adoption of Agenda
 - 4. Adoption of Minutes
 - 5. Communications
- B. Reports
 - 1. Chairman
 - 2. Secretary
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Administrator
 - 5. Committees
 - 6. Legal Counsel
- C. Public Hearings
 - 1. Big Bang Enterprise: Notice of Violation 2008-1020
 - 2. Conditional Use: 2008-2063 S.Y. Kim's Development Corp
 - 3. Preliminary Plat Major Subdivision: 2008-1878 Jane Mack
- D. Contested Cases: None
- E. Permits and related actions: review and decide
 - 1. Conditional Use: 2008-2063 S.Y. Kim's Development Corp
 - 2. Preliminary Plat Major Subdivision: 2008-1878 Jane Mack
- F. Old Business
 - 1. Re-adopt rezones adopted at November 13, 2008 Zoning Board Meeting
 - a. Map 20. Rezone PR to TR, Lots 030 H 01, 02, 03; Rezone VR to VC, various lots
 - b. Map 24. Rezone VC to TR, Lots 006 H 35, 36, 37, 38; Rezone VR to TR Lots 008 H 31, 33, 36, 37; Rezone VR to VC, various lots
- G. New Business
 - 1. Review new rezone proposals and approve advertising for public comment.
- H. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with legal counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters.
- I. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese T. Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Dr. Elizabeth D. Rechebei, Acting Chair

Turtles shine in Christmas tree decorating contest

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Oleai Elementary School garnered a total of 267 points, just three points ahead of defending champion Saipan Community School, to emerge top winner in the annual 2008 Christmas Tree Decoration Contest organized by the Paseo De Marianas Promoters Inc.

Like all the other 12 participating schools, OES Turtles used pet bottles, sachets of coffee, aluminum cans, foil, and other recyclable or non-biodegradable materials to decorate their winning entry.

The pet bottles were shaped into lamps while the other materials were made into Santa Clause



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
Photo shows Oleai Elementary School's winning entry in the 2008 Annual Christmas Tree decoration contest organized by the Paseo De Marianas Promoters Inc.

images and angels. The school's mascot, the turtle, was also transformed into Santa Clause and other such images that may have captured the hearts of different judges from government and private agencies.

With its winning effort, Oleai took the first place prize of \$3,000, courtesy of one of the major sponsors this year RNV Construction, during the well-attended awarding ceremonies last Thursday night.

First lady Josie Fitial was the special guest of honor.

Last year's first prize winner Saipan Community School placed second this time after compiling 264 points and took home \$2,000 donated by Kinpachi Restaurant.

Two entries were adjudged third place winners, William S. Reyes Elementary School and Garapan Elementary School. They were tied with 259 points and each won \$1,000, compliments of *Hafadai Magazine*.

Four schools landed in fifth place, namely Dandan Elementary School, Joshua Generation International Academy, San Vicente Elementary School, and San Antonio Elementary School. They were awarded \$750 each from MISD Bldg.

Consolation prizes of \$500 each were given to Kagman Elementary School, Grace Christian Academy, Tanapag Elementary School, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, (all courtesy of RNV), and Lad-

era International School (donated by Kinpachi).

PDM Promoters Inc.'s Sonia Siwa, who coordinated the event, said this year's event drew the biggest crowd ever.

Before the awarding, the participating schools presented entertaining numbers to spice up the festivities.

Some of the *man'amko* also made their presence felt. They were part of the event by decorating their own Christmas tree.

In her message, PDM Promoters CEO and director Misako Kamata said they are very happy to see many people and wished them good luck for the Christmas season.

"I hope that everybody enjoyed it," she said.



ROSELYN MONROYO
Students of Oleai Elementary School cheer as they receive their cash prize of \$3,000 for topping the 2008 Annual Christmas Tree decoration contest at the Paseo De Marianas on Thursday night.



IT IS NEVER TOO LATE!!! Finish High School ESL/GED/AS



New students MUST make an appointment at the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Office in Building "G" to take the CASAS Assessment Test

Starting January 5-22, 2009 in Room K-1 at NMC.

Ongoing/Returning Student Registration:
January 26-27, 2009, 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

New Student Registration:
January 28-29, 2009, 10 am to 6 pm in ABE Office.

Late Registration
January 30 - February 02, 2009, 9 am to 4 pm in ABE Office.

Student Orientation:
February 02, 2009, 5-6:30 pm in D-1

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE Adult Basic Education Program Spring 2009 Schedule

Adjunct Orientation:
CASAS Appraisal Test

January 16, 2009	F	06:00-07:30 PM	TBA
January 05-06 & 12-13, 2009	M-T	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Pre-Test

January 07-08 & 14-15, 2009	W-Th	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Post-Test
For Referred Returning Students

January 20-22, 2009	T-Th	09:00-10:30 AM	K-1
		01:00-02:30 PM	K-1
		05:00-06:30 PM	K-1

CASAS Make-Up Tests
Registration for Returning Students: January 26-27, 2009
Registration for New Students: January 28-29, 2009
Late Registration: January 30, February 02, 2009
Student Orientation: February 02, 2009
Add/Drop for Students: February 04-13, 2009
First Day of Instruction: M W F Classes
T-Th Classes

January 20-22, 2009	T-Th	09:00-04:00 PM	K-2
January 26-27, 2009	M-T	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE
January 28-29, 2009	W-Th	10:00-06:00 PM	ABE
January 30, February 02, 2009	F-M	09:00-04:00 PM	ABE
February 02, 2009	M	05:00-06:30 PM	D-1
February 04-13, 2009		08:00-05:00 PM	ABE
		February 04, 2009 (Wednesday)	
		February 05, 2009 (Thursday)	
		February 07, 2009	
		February 08, 2009	

Last Day of Instruction:

This schedule is subject to change. For more information please contact the ABE Office at 234-5498 Ext. 1723 or 1724

This advertisement was paid for from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

DECEMBER 22, 1998

OPA cites gov't 'wastes'

The Office of the Public Auditor has identified more than \$23 million in unessential appropriations under FY 1999 budget which the cash-strapped government can either eliminate or curb spending in a bid to boost its shrinking coffers. OPA chief Leo L. LaMotte said the government stands to save \$10 million if it strictly complies with the freeze hiring and deferment of salary raise as proposed last January in the first wave of austerity measures by Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio. "Due to slowdown in economic activity, government operations may not need the number of (full-time employees) budgeted for fiscal year 1999," he said in a letter to Rep. Melvin Faisao.

New law removes hiring constraints

A bill easing restriction on the employment of non-resident workers in the Northern Marianas was signed into law yesterday, allowing employers to utilize their employees to perform work outside their job categories specified in the work contract. The measure removes what lawmakers described as "unreasonable bureaucratic or regulatory obstacles" that impede the efficient use and employment of foreign labor. Public Law 11-51 was put in place in response to clamor from the business community to permit the cross utilization of guest employees in view of difficulties confronting employers in acquiring the services of foreign workers because of the indefinite ban on hiring.

DECEMBER 22, 1999

Revamp criminal justice system

The CNMI government must overhaul its criminal justice system to prevent a surge in crimes in light of an independent study that shows an 83 percent jump in admission in the corrections facility over a 10-year period since 1989. In contrast, the study indicated that prosecution of misdemeanor and felony cases lagged behind considerably based on 500 random samples, either due to poor investigation or lack of manpower. Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, chief of the Prison Task Force, advocated for reforms which he said will compliment efforts in improving the prison facilities.

Legislature eyes changes to 'public purpose' law

Both the House and the Senate will likely come up with respective legislation amending the "public purpose" law that has sparked disagreement between members of the Legislature and the Tenorio administration in recent weeks. Although lawmakers have reached an "understanding" with Finance Sec. Lucy DLG. Nielsen on which expenditures they can charge to their government accounts, this amendment is necessary to ensure that problems will not crop up again in the future. Senate President Paul A. Manglona said the meeting last week resulted to an "understanding and better awareness" on what are questionable and acceptable expenses by the Legislature.

DECEMBER 22, 2000

SEDC unveils economic plan

Local officials are optimistic of better times ahead as the Strategic Economic Development Council begins to carry out steps aimed at enticing investors into the tourism industry and boosting the number of visitors to the islands. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio, House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, Senate Vice President Thomas P. Villagomez and other members of the Legislature attended SEDC's presentation of a five-year plan which it hammered out for the past 15 months. It is the first phase of recommendations that both the government and the private sector will have to jointly undertake to give the CNMI a boost to the arm following years of economic slumber.

DPW pressed to hasten dump closure

In yet another attempt to fast-track closure of the Puerto Rico dumpsite, the House of Representative has expressed anew its "grave concerns" over the chronic health and environmental hazards it poses to island residents and tourists. In a resolution adopted the other day, members asked Public Works Sec. Juan B. Cepeda to hasten the bidding process to procure services that will shut down the site as dumping ground for trash and garbage on Saipan. The Department of Public Workers has issued a request for proposals from companies interested in undertaking the project until January 19, 2001.

Two win in 2008 Christmas drawing contest

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tiana Lizama, a Grade 4B student of Tinian Elementary School, topped the 2008 "My Holiday Greetings to our Visitors" Drawing Contest.

Lizama won \$50 for besting several other entries from Tinian.

Lizama's classmate Elton Hofsheneider settled for the second place prize of \$30, while another schoolmate, Rosemarie Malicdem, Grade 6A, took third place and \$20.

Above are the winning entries in the 2008 "My Holiday Greetings to Our Visitors" Drawing Contest held in connection with the annual Christmas activities at the Paseo De Marianas in Garapan, Saipan.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.



Coast Guard cutter delivers Santa Claus and presents in Micronesia

WOLEAI ATOLL, YAP STATE, Federated States of Micronesia—The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Assateague* this past week delivered holiday gifts to islanders in a remote part of Micronesia.

In conjunction with the Department of Defense-sponsored Operation Christmas Drop, the cutter's crew carried gifts and supplies provided by the Guam Navy Officers Spouses Connection, Andersen Air Force Base, and Coast Guard personnel stationed in Guam.

"Operation Santa's Sleigh" was the name given to the cutter's 390-nautical mile trip south of Guam to the remote Woleai Atoll in the Yap State of the Federated States of Micronesia. With the cutter off shore, Santa Claus (a.k.a. the Assateague's commanding officer, Lt. Jim Jarnac), embarked a small boat and headed to the beach to deliver more than 500 pounds of toys, books and clothes.

Jarnac also conducted a one hour presentation at the island's high school for more than 50 11th and 12th graders and talked about his life experiences in the Coast Guard. Jarnac also explained the many roles of the service in the remote islands of Micronesia.

The *Assateague*'s crew members were the guests of honor at a large festival featuring island cultural dances, singing, performances and food. The crew members and islanders also sang Christmas carols.

"This was the experience of a lifetime for my entire crew," said Jarnac. "We are truly grateful to the warm hospitality shown us by the people of Woleai Atoll."

The *Assateague* is a 110-foot patrol boat home ported in Apra Harbor, Guam. The cutter supports Coast Guard missions, including search and rescue, port security, and maritime law

enforcement, in the Western and Central Pacific. (USCG)

The commanding officer of the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Assateague*, Lt. Jim Jarnac, plays Santa Claus and arrives at remote Woleai Atoll in Yap State of the Federated States of Micronesia, Friday, Dec. 19, 2008.

WWW.USCGHAWAII.COM



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RFP 09-007

The CNMI Public School System (PSS) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for Cellular Services, Long Distance Services, TI Circuits to the Islands of Tinian and Rota, Off Island T1 Circuit (s), Basic Network Equipment Maintenance and PBX Equipment Maintenance.

Detailed information on the scope of work will be made available on or after December 18, 2008 at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands during regular PSS working hours. Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope containing one (1) original signed proposal and three (3) copies face marked "PSS RFP 09-007." Responsibility determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope face marked "RFP 09-007, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" containing one(1) original and three (3) copies. Responsibility documents will not be available for public viewing without the prior consent of the contractor.

All proposals shall be delivered to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office no later than 4:00 p.m., January 19, 2009. Any proposal submitted after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

A pre-submission conference will be held on December 29, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the PSS Board of Education Conference Room located on the 2nd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building. All questions shall be delivered in writing to the PSS Procurement & Supply Officer, Attn: E-Rate (RFP 09-007) or sent via facsimile or e-mail no later than January 6, 2009 at 4:00p.m., local time. Please be advised of the following contact information: Facsimile: 670-664-3791; Email: babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp

PSS reserves the right to award a single or multiple awards, or award multiple parts of this RFP to a single contractor, or to reject any or all proposals or to cancel in whole or in part this solicitation if to do so is in the best interest of PSS.

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
Acting, P&S Officer

The announcement of winners was held during the awarding ceremony for the annual Christmas tree decoration contest last Thursday, Dec. 18, at the Paseo De Marianas.

Grade 5 student Meriden Hocog of Sinapalo Elementary School topped the drawing contest on Rota and went away with the first prize of \$50.

Theora Manglona was second and won \$30, while Jana S. Mendiola was third for a prize of \$20.

The winners drew simple images of the things around the islands.

Lizama's winning entry has images of a coconut, a house, a lady in her native costume, sun, birds, and other animals.

The contest was organized by the PDM Promoters Inc., a non-profit organization aimed at making Paseo De Marianas and the Garapan vicinity back to a family oriented place and to make it safe and clean for tourist and the local community.

It was in coordination with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

The annual activity drew a huge crowd during the opening on Dec. 3 and the awarding ceremonies on Dec. 18.

Sonia Siwa of PDM Promoters said they hope to make it more exciting and bigger for next year.

"We thank the students for participating in the drawing contest," she said.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhc.gov.mp>



NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

Edward M. Ayuyu, ("Trustor"), on or about September 17, 2001 gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs, United States of America, ("VA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on September 17, 2001 under Document No. 01-1942 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the VA.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 345 R 426, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 929 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NO. 345 R 09 DATED SEPTEMBER 25, 1984, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 84-2049, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default Trustee issued its Notice of Default on July 20, 2006. More than thirty days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2CMC §4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, Trustee will, on December 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m., at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's Office in Garapan, Saipan, whose address is P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96951 under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than \$10,000.00.

All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by December 11, 2008 and must be received no later than December 22, 2008 by 8:00 a.m. at our office in Garapan, Saipan. Off-island bidders must notify the NMHC Corporate Director in writing (by any mode of written communication including facsimile or other electronic transmission) of their intent to bid. Off-island bidders may appoint a representative to participate in the auction on their behalf.

A deposit of ten percent (10%) of the offered purchase price must be paid by the winning bidder on the bid date by 4:00 p.m. and the balance of the purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check, cashier's check, electronic or wire transfers, within 72 hours from the time of sale.

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property of the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

DATED this 20th day of November 2008.

/s/ Joshua T. Sasamoto
Corporate Director, NMHC

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNN'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 354

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Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

W. Mark Felt

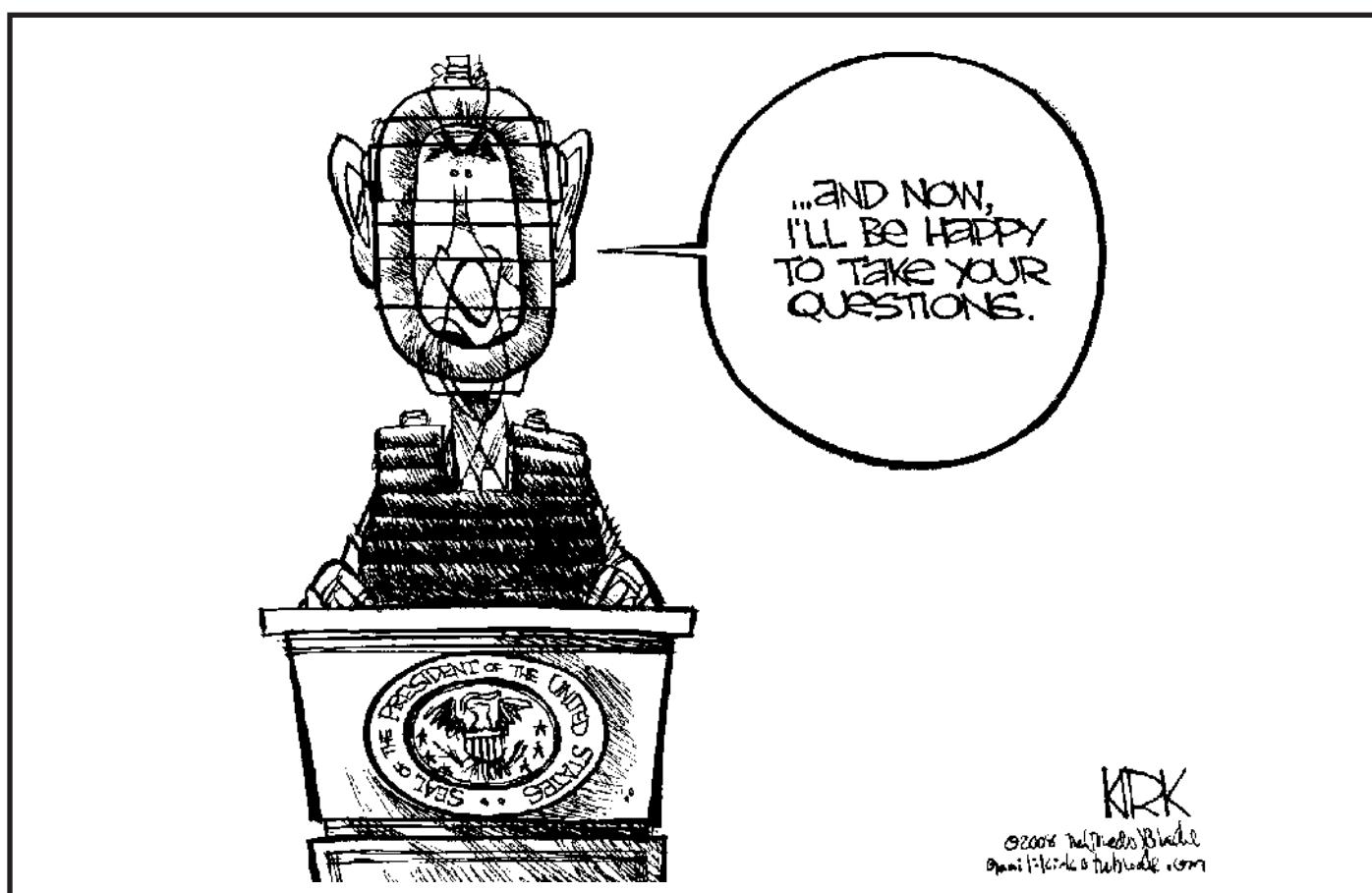
Old men forget," says the Shakespearean warrior-king on the day of battle, yet there are those who will "remember with advantage" what feats they did in times of strife, when great issues were decided. W. Mark Felt Sr., who died Thursday at the age of 95, never really availed himself of that old man's privilege. He played a key role in bringing down an administration that badly abused its powers, but he did it in secret, and he kept that secret almost to the grave. By the time he revealed his identity—just 3 1/2 years ago—the anonymous source known as "Deep Throat" had been struck down by common calamities of age—stroke and dementia. So much for remembering with advantage.

But, then, Felt was never all that certain whether he would be regarded as a hero or a turncoat. As a high FBI official with intimate knowledge of what was going on in the Nixon administration during its frantic efforts to cover up Watergate and other misdeeds, he helped Bob Woodward of The Post immeasurably. He served as a valuable anonymous source while the team of Woodward and Carl Bernstein worked the biggest scandal story in ages. Felt could tell himself—and certainly many would have told him—that he was doing the country an invaluable service, that he had no choice but to reveal the secret information entrusted to him.

But Mark Felt was also a creature of the FBI—J. Edgar Hoover's FBI—and he knew that what he was doing would be seen by many of his colleagues as a betrayal. Given what we know, and continue to learn, about Hoover's abuses of power, the loyalty that Felt displayed to him and to his legacy only adds to the ambiguity of his career. In fact, it led to his conviction on charges of authorizing illegal break-ins at the premises of antiwar radicals and their families—for which Felt received a pardon from Ronald Reagan.

Mark Felt inhabited a world in which good and talented and diligent people such as himself could feel it was a justifiable act to spy on someone of the stature of Martin Luther King Jr. It is a world in which many things, good and bad, come under the broad rubric of "security." Few who operate in it emerge as pristine heroes, as we continue to be reminded. But Shakespeare notwithstanding, there's not much likelihood by this time that the good Mark Felt did will be interred with his bones.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



My letter to Santa Claus

Dear Santa Claus,

DMy name is Tony and I am 8 years old plus 70. I sent you a similar letter last Christmas, but you didn't grant all my wishes so I am asking again. I am trying very hard not to be too critical of all the dumb things going on around me done by adults.

In a few days it will be Christmas and I want to send you my wish list which I hope you will consider when you fly to Saipan to deliver everybody else's wishes. Will Rudolph be driving your sled again? You are so lucky that reindeers pull your sled. Gasoline is so expensive. I wish I had a reindeer for my dad's car.

First on my list: Santa, can you solve our CUC problem? The adults have been messing it up for over 25 years. We pay perhaps the highest kilowatt rate in the United States and have the junkiest power plant around. All the people are suffering from the high rates and there doesn't seem to be any relief in sight.

The people in charge of the plant and the people in the government somehow cannot agree on how to fix this problem. Do you know some people who know how to operate a power plant properly?

If you bring no other gift, please bring a good electric generating plant. If you promise to bring the electric plant, I will have my mommy bake you some special tortillas served with fresh coconut milk. Thanks.

Second on my list: The people here are all excited about something called Federalization. I really don't understand what it is. My daddy says the United States is going to knock us down and make us poorer than we are. Is that true? Can't we talk with them and work things out? Do we have to go to court and fight? Why can't grownups work together to solve problems.

Also, Santa, please help the people born here understand that they are United States citizens and should pay allegiance to the United States. Also please make the United States understand what our people want and to respect their culture. Also help our people to know what they want. My history teacher tells me that we have been ruled over by many other countries. But he says if we work closely with the U.S., we will become free and wealthy. Why can't we agree on what we should do to become strong and happy? Was it always like this?

We have free access to live and work in America without restraint. In fact, quite a few of the wealthier people here have homes in America and run back and forth living six months here and six months in America. Isn't that neat? All of us have U.S. passports and some of us don't realize what that means. Millions of people would love to have one but can't.

My father tells me the U.S. sends us lots of dollars each year to help my country. And that we pay very little taxes compared to other places. Then why are we so upset? Is it because we cannot have it all our way?

Third on my list: As you fly over China, Russia, Japan and Korea, drop lots and lots of tourist brochures showing the people there to come visit us for their vacations. We really welcome them and

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



promise to be nice to them. They can enjoy clean beaches and blue ocean and great weather. Santa, we need lots of tourists. Don't forget to print the brochures in their own languages. Ok?

Do you know why they don't come more often? Santa, you fly around the world. Can you share some of the secrets why other locations get lots of tourists? I heard from some of my friends that places like the Bahamas (wherever that is) gets lots of tourists. Why can't we?

Fourth: We have many non-resident workers living and working here that help us. Many of them have children or a daddy or mommy back home. It can be pretty lonely during the Christmas season without their families. Santa, please stop by their houses and bring them some good cheer and lots of hope for a better future.

We are all Baby Jesus' children and we all believe in you, Santa. But some of us are more fortunate than others. How easy it is to forget that. Please soften their loneliness so that they will continue to believe in Baby Jesus and in you. We all need hope.

Fifth: Santa, do you have something that would help us to understand that we must learn a skill or trade so that we can work better and smarter. My mommy is always scolding me when I don't study hard. Can you make us understand that the only way we can become strong and make money is to have good work skills and habits? When we try, we can do a job as good as anybody, but for some reason we are not.

You know, Santa, when I finish my schooling, I am going to learn either a trade or I am going to go to college. My teacher is encouraging me. I wish my parents would too. I have to do that or I will be poor and without money. What a sad thing. I know I can help myself and so can a lot of other people, if we really want to. What do you think, Santa? Can you bring lots of determination and strong wills to help ourselves?

Sixth: I have noticed that a lot of people are depressed and scared. We are all worried on how we will survive the new laws and the lack of money and the recession (what is that?). As a result, a lot of people are leaving the islands and going to the States. I have been there and it is difficult to make a living there. Besides that the people here are friendlier. I love it here and don't want to go back.

Seventh: Though I put this request way down here, it is my most important one. Please make my mommy well again. She is in Los Angeles having treatment. My brothers and sister and I miss her very much. Though I am young I realize that a strong family bond is the most important thing in life. We all miss her terribly and pray

See MY on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Funny—how things turn out

By WILLIAM H. STEWART

Economist

William H. Stewart is an economist, historian, and military cartographer.



First of a two-part series

Judging from recent economic events in the United States and elsewhere in the world—economics doesn't seem to make much sense to anyone anymore.

I remember not too long ago the United States government was so apprehensive of the communist threat from China and the former Soviet Union that the nation fought several wars to keep the evil scourge confined if not outright defeated. In those days communism was the antithesis of capitalist philosophy and as such was the contested archenemy of the U.S. government and Wall Street moguls and all they represented—(or should it be mongrel). But nothing remains the same forever—as we have seen of late.

It was only a few years ago in a country representing the epitome of a state controlled economy, that Chinese Deng Xiaoping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China (PRC), had the revolutionary revelation that "to be rich is glorious." He had this epiphany after realizing that if the party wanted to create vast wealth, China should encourage a market driven economy—reward individual initiative—abandon many govern-

ment financed and inefficiently operated means of production and, in turn, embrace the tenets of capitalism and private enterprise—full bore—Wall Street style. This they have done with a vengeance to the extent that the United States has lost much of its manufacturing industry as a result of outsourcing to China and elsewhere as the production of vast amounts of manufactured items of all types previously "Made In the USA" has been moved overseas.

This is nowhere more obvious than when you visit Walmart and note that most non food items on sale have labels indicating they were manufactured in China. While this has "knocked-off" many American manufacturers of similar items—the up-side, however, is that Walmart's cornucopia of stuff has made many products affordable that might not have otherwise been the case and in doing so has raised the standard of living of many Americans. I have often wondered if the Chinese government provided the financing for the rapid expansion of Walmart as a way to facilitate the marketing of Chinese products? If so, it will have been one of the most brilliant marketing strategies of all time—and that you must admire.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, with the American Government as the previous, foremost free world advocate of capitalism and private enterprise—and to some extent a modified laissez faire economic system—we now witness Congressional action designed to inject a great tranche of the financial resources of the United States into the economy in a manner to become a direct participant in the country's financial sector not too unlike that of the former communist and socialist economies. As a result some observers think that approach is simply one way to "pave the path of good intentions" and maybe it is—I'm not sure at this point. Nor, I suspect, are many of those in the U.S. Congress and elsewhere who cautiously recommend government investment in the financial and automobile manufacturing sectors.

Thus, while China and Russia are on track to largely abandon much of the previously communist state controlled mechanisms to direct their economies—they have adopted much of the doctrine of capitalism.

Meanwhile, if recent actions are an example, the United States government is starting to take the country the other way and is now embracing what heretofore were communist and socialist convictions to support the nation's deteriorating domestic economy. Today, the U.S. Government and by extension the American taxpayer is heavily participating in the economy in ways it previously detested. The American government is now—or soon will be—a major participant in the ownership of banks, insurance companies and possibly major players in the automobile manufacturing industry. All this is not too different from what the former Soviet Union and the PRC cast off as not being an efficient

method to raise the standard of living of their population.

Wow! I'm confused. Friends—we live in strange times.

Is that not ironic, incongruous—or what?

Do you suppose the Russians will soon fear the U.S. as a dangerous meddler experimenting with socialistic philosophy as a competitor in their plans to encourage growth of their new capitalistic economy? If so, would it not be similar to that of America which was once so suspicious and distrustful of the intrusion of communism in what was once our own society's economy founded upon the system of free enterprise?

Of course, things are really not that bad yet—I just couldn't resist considering the dichotomy presented by the situation.

There's no denying that both countries have undergone marked change from their previously professed guiding economic philosophy. *To be continued.*

Editor's Note: In the 60's the author served as an economic development project advisor when the State Department undertook programs to implement President Kennedy's foreign policy of encouraging the then newly emerging independent countries in Africa and Asia to use the tools of capitalism and private enterprise as implementing agents for their national economic development aspirations as a competing economic alternative to Soviet style communism and socialism.

titude of fighting the federal government and we don't even have the means to fight. The job of our government is to hold the federal government "accountable" for their actions through collaboration and not to fight over the implementation of federal laws. Our Commonwealth government by design is and has always been in a position to have diplomacy work to our advantage through the United Nations. The "unique" status that our politicians have provoked was first recognized by the United Nations—not the United States and I submit that the UN is still the best governing entity to fight for our Constitutional Rights. The Feds will HAVE TO listen to the UN because our delegate can only create "background noise" which is easily muffled in Washington. Taking our case for the Compact funds to UN will put us on Front Street with the Feds—if you get my meaning but we must also "own up to our mistakes as the basis of the federal government's arguments will be Its OUR OWN FAULT and to a large degree the feds will be RIGHT! If we want to fight for the Compact funds, take our concerns to the UN as we don't have a "vote" in Congress nor a Senate Seat. Don't try to fight the Feds ALONE on their own turf in Congress and especially when we haven't capitulated for our own mistakes. The power plays we are trying to make are examples of horrible politics.

I know someone may snatch this idea to seek help from the UN just like the recent request by Jose Dela Cruz for an economic summit and the governor's desire to support the summit reminds me of the true source of our political problem—social imperialism. I have been asking for an economic taskforce and summit with the U.S. since the Babauta administration and not one ounce of support but the moment a local person offers the same suggestion there is support. I'm not jealous just stating the facts and I'm sure people with common sense can connect the dots to the wall of social imperialism that will yield the same old results—nothing.

Our new delegate is now going off to Washington "without a unified stance on federalization" just as I predicted. The Feds just requested the courts to dismiss the governor's lawsuit because it is clearly not representative of the people's desire and it is also "speculative and hypothetical," which is the same reasons I stated when the law suit was first brought up—I said "we can't file a law suit for something that hasn't taken place" and now my argument is also supported by the federal government—duh! We are experiencing

the backlash of our own failure now and not the feds implementation of federalization. Now another idea for a lawsuit has surfaced. We keep sending the signal to Washington that "we are looking for a weapon to fight the feds with" and the pattern of our fighting is clearly documented dating back to the Froilan administration. I can also guarantee this administration "WILL NOT" appoint the necessary and proper people for the summit based on their economic and political abilities but their POLITICS. Our leaders should take note of our new president's decisions to appoint people based more on merit than politics. If the economic summit is composed of the "same old people and mentality" that contributed to create this economic mess then we know what the outcome will be the SOS (Same Old S*&#). You can't fix a problem with the same mentality that caused it—Albert Einstein.

When will our leaders become real politicians with diplomatic skills and use the tools of principles and values for which there is "NO DEFENSE." Given the name calling and some of the outrageous statements coming from the executive office about the Feds and some of those in the Legislature, I don't think many of our leaders really understand the importance and magnitude of remaining professional and using the tools of diplomacy given to us by our founders to govern over our democracy. Our representation in Congress has always been an "insult" to the core Democratic values and the principle of Republicanism. But we (the CNMI) used the lack of equal representation for an excuse to fight against the feds and have never approached the challenge of changing our status from an intellectual approach. We never really fought for representation in Congress and used it for an excuse to create more enmity by giving the impression of using representation for a weapon (reason) to fight with instead of addressing the true source of the problem.

We only have representation in Congress now because of a "brokered deal" over federalization which I see as nothing more than "tokenism" without a vote. The only legitimate fight we have is the right to vote in Congress and for the president but we created an oxymoron of our own politics for "equal rights and representation" when we cry "unfair equal representation and voting rights" yet hide behind a flag of "uniqueness & Covenant specialties." It is more our own fault than the feds as we have never really tried real diploma-

See FIND on Page 13

Letter to the Editor

Find a weapon and fight!

Believe it or not, much of how we are perceived in Washington is centered on the title of this letter—a people led by a government who looks for a weapon to fight the federal government. The discovery of potential Compact funds to help restructure our economy is very interesting and seems to have the potential of being the "real McCoy" at a time when we need it most. My mother used to tell me that people are always looking for a gold mine only to discover they were standing on it. Well it seems we have been doing just that if the legalities over the Compact funds discovery hold true. But my concern is the political approach to certifying the discovery and claiming a right to the funds, which is FIGHTING. The true and great politicians have all MASTERED the "art of diplomacy" but it seems to be very hard to get that point across to our chief executive. The better diplomats we become the better our chances of influencing legislation and being successful in Washington.

I have been trying for years to convince some of our political leaders to allow me to help them with their "political and economic strategies" but everyone knows the wall of "Social Imperialism" is in my way because I'm not local and they would NEVER let me get that kind of clout to influence political and economic decisions. So I'll just keep showing them and the people that I am ahead of times and their outdated politics on Capital Hill and maybe ONE will realize they need my help—they don't know the game or the rules of national politics—just fighting. I say this because of the many educational, political, and economic predictions that I have made which became a reality and now I'm about to offer another prediction that will come true and I still haven't gotten one thank you. But I do this for the people and not so much for the politicians and educators who like to STEAL my ideas and pretend its their own—so here goes.

The idea of filing another lawsuit in the present political atmosphere is absolutely ludicrous because it still presents the same at-

work together. We need cooperation more than ever. We must put aside any bad feelings and join hands. This is our country and we are responsible for what we do with it. I learned in class that for every action there is a reaction. Let's make the right actions so that we get the right reactions. I apologize for asking so many questions in my letter to you, but there is so much I don't un-

derstand. Is it because I am young yet?

Santa, I am not asking for any toys or gifts for me. Please spend all the time you can on fixing up what I mentioned above and whatever else you feel needs fixing. I hope that lots of other children, and even adults will also write to you and ask for your assistance.

Christmas Day is the time to believe in miracles. On that day Jesus

was born and since then He has guided us as we continue to believe in Him. Even though I am 8 years old plus 70, I believe that Jesus and his Father will make everything all right. As you fly over the CNMI can you sprinkle some magic dust which will make us happier? I once saw Tinkerbell fly over a village and sprinkle dust which made all the people below smile and happy.

My mommy will leave a cold glass of coconut juice and the tortillas on the dining room table. Please enjoy them and take back the rest with you to share with Mrs. Claus. Don't forget my wish list. Ok, Santa? Remember I still believe in you. Help everybody to believe also. Baby Jesus and you can make miracles happen. Merry Christmas to you and to all. May God bless us all!

MY

From Page 10

for her speedy recovery. If you have any spare prayers, please send them to her. Also do this for other kids whose parents are sick or away, especially for the children of the soldiers in the war.

Eighth: Santa, please help us to

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.			

▲84°	▼76°	▲83°	▼76°	▲85°	▼76°	▲84°	▼76°	▲84°	▼75°
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Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼76
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼77
Yap	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼80
Pohnpei	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼74
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲90	▼76
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼75

Around The Globe

Auckland	Dreary	▲67	▼57
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲36	▼21
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	▲58	▼53
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲79	▼70
London	Cloudy	▲50	▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲62	▼50
Manila	Showers	▲82	▼72
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲82	▼71
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲75	▼63
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲33	▼24
Osaka	Rain	▲46	▼30
Paris	Cloudy	▲50	▼34
Pusan	Sunny	▲41	▼23
Rome	Sunny	▲58	▼40
Salem	Cloudy	▲38	▼34
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲53	▼45
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲25	▼16
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲48	▼33
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲39	▼25

Tides

Saipan Harbor	
4:58AM Today	High Tide: 1.4 Feet
9:28AM Today	Low Tide: 1.1 Feet
3:19PM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet
10:59PM Today	Low Tide: 0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:39AM	5:52 PM	Today	2:01AM	1:46 PM
Tuesday	6:39AM	5:53 PM	Tuesday	2:51AM	2:26 PM
Wednesday	6:40AM	5:53 PM	Wednesday	3:43AM	3:10 PM
Thursday	6:40AM	5:54 PM	Thursday	4:35AM	3:57 PM
Friday	6:41AM	5:55 PM	Friday	5:27AM	4:46 PM

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

■ ISLAND SNAPSHOT Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

■ BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

■ BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

■ SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

■ TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

■ Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.

■ Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).

■ Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.

■ Photos must have been taken in the last two months.

■ For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

■ Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

■ Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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■ Fax: (670) 235-3740

■ Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950

■ Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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■ The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.

■ For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597 11:50am 12:25pm 1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily

CO9313 8:30am 9:20am Daily

CO9597 11:50am 1:20pm 1,7 via Rota

CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6

CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily

CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily

CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099 5:00am 7:40am Daily

NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily

NW 075 4:55pm 7:30pm Daily

Saipan-Osaka

OZ 119 4:00am 6:40am 1,4,6

NW 083 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:25am 11:05am Daily

Saipan-Incheon

OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1

OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7

OZ 606 3:20pm 7:00pm Daily

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844 2:50am 5:40am 2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 3,5 via Koror

CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily

PR 111 6:00am 7:50am 1,2,4,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiania

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline ETD ETA Frequency

Guam-Rota

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Letter to the Editor

Labor pains

Ours is a time when the old world is passing, and the new world is being born.

While visiting the plains of Jiangsu north of Shanghai in March early this year, former Saipan garment factory workers in that province referred to their own government offices as "Labor." My host's brother who worked for the police department was referred to as someone who worked at "Labor." An imposing edifice in Sheyang that looked to me like the city hall, was pointed out as "Labor."

It dawned on me then that with their experience of primary governance in the CNMI being through the Department of Labor, it rendered the word "Labor" to be synonymous to "Government." This was confirmed upon my return when in assisting a friend get a police clearance, I was asked to drive to "Labor," yet was directed to the Moving Vehicle Office and the Guma Hustisia (courthouse)! The Department of Labor and Immigration over at San Antonio has come to symbolize the regulatory power of the CNMI government for some of our less than English language proficient contract workers.

Not too long ago, Labor victoriously announced that the department has finally caught up on the backlog of labor applications and case processing. That was welcomed news except that anecdotal evidence was not as rosy as the announcement appeared.

A case familiar to the Director of Labor was that of a waitress who applied for transfer to be a house worker. The employer was informed that an advertisement had to be made on the position before the applicant could apply for it. So the position was advertised three weeks in a row, after which, the employer accepted the waitress' transfer application, and proceeded with the paperwork. The receiving

officer made a notation that the transfer application was late because the 45-day transition period expired due to the advertisement requirement.

The application was submitted in November 2008. After almost two months of waiting for the completion of processing, the waitress' mother back home became ill so she departed for a 30-day trip expecting that the transfer request would be finished within a month. It was not.

Follow-ups made by employer got the response that the papers were in order but that new procedures were in place, thus, the delay. By July, the excuse was that the ID-making machine was broken but the employer was assured that there were no deficiencies in the application.

The waitress returned to Saipan in August and when her employer followed up her I.D., she was told that a medical certificate was missing. A fee was collected for a duplicate of the medical certificate at the government's health office in the same building.

A month later, a notice of denial was received for UNTIMELY SUBMISSION. An appeal was made with the Director of Labor's office explaining the circumstances surrounding the alleged untimely submission, and the Director saw the point, instructing the office to collect only the appropriate late submission penalty fee. At a cost of a few days multiplied by four bucks, the employer relented. When she went to the window to inquire of the exact amount, she was presented the Director's notation of an amount of more than \$200. Curious how the amount was arrived at, the officer raised an eyebrow and asked that he be given a day to clarify the matter.

It appeared that the director thought the untimely submission was for a renewal which would have necessitated a collection of late fees from the start of the employment termination period, but since this was a denied request for transfer, it required a hearing. A hearing fee also had to be collected. There was a two-month waiting line for the next available hearing slot.

Refusing to be victimized, the employer finally activated

personal connections, and a hearing got scheduled within the week. To the credit of the assigned Labor hearing officer, a quick judgment was made to override the untimely submission decision, and to approve the application. The whole process took 11 months, and additional expenses.

A case of inefficiency nor of bureaucratic intransigence is not being alleged. In fact, the employer claims that Labor personnel were universally courteous and helpful. The federalization of the department was a foregone conclusion and everyone was only too willing to show how well they knew their jobs. The net result, however, were less than rosy.

Contracting of labor has been a consequence of the globalization of the processes of resource extraction, production, and distribution. Management headhunting in the last 40 years had been a lucrative industry, so why should not the hiring of the peons in factory lines be any different?

Today, a prominent defense contractor in the Middle East stands accused for bringing in Indian nationals to the Arabian Peninsula for promised jobs

that the contractor could not deliver. It had collected fees from the aspirants for the advertised positions.

The case against abuses within the garment industry had a lot to do with the corruption of the hiring process, and the atmosphere that was established that allowed unscrupulous operators within and outside the industry to victimize many. Operators in Jiangsu are notorious for victimizing their garment factory workers to possible employment not only in the CNMI but also Japan and Korea, India and Pakistan, Madagascar and the Arabian Peninsula.

The existence of bonded servitude is as old as ancient civilization, and as pervasive today everywhere for as long as the culture of exploitation of resources—natural, technological and human—continues unabated as an inherent component of our globalized economics. Fueled by our addiction to mindless and needless consumer goods and services, and dependent on non-renewable energy source, the human journey has just crossed the threshold of massive shock therapy and a jarring of our corporate consciousness.

It is, of course, the easy course to look for someone to blame for the perceived and actual miseries of labor around the world. With the collapse of the big three automotive giants in Detroit, even organized labor in the United States has now found itself at the mercy of the capital sources and management forces it had long opposed.

The need for enlightened local politics is self-evident, as the rapacity of the global stock markets has painfully demonstrated its unreliability to sustain local economies. It may just be a footnote to say that Tina Sablan's dogged insistence on transparency in governance, and Maria Frica Pangelinan's enlightening discourses on processes, are hopeful signs at our local level, but alas, they are too few and far in between. A globalized economy is irreversible in a shrinking planet, so an authentic and an accountable local polity structure must become robust and broadly engaging. This requires intentionality and dynamism in our diverse cultures, and that could very well be our only salvation.

Jaime Vergara
Via e-mail

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FIND

From Page 11

cy which is why we have witnessed the endless power plays that begin with lobbyist and now we have lawsuits, criminal investigations, and federal laws to deal with—power plays with no diplomacy. Strangely enough, I have been subjected to same mentality of "picking up a stick" by our Board and previous COE so I can attest to the mentality of the old school politics on a first hand basis. It is clear our relationship with the Feds is not getting better but worst and we MUST take the first steps to change these conditions as a united people and a united government. One people, one direction to end the fighting and become better diplomats

Ambrose Bennett

Kagman

Business

Tentacles of Madoff Ponzi scheme reach far and wide

NEW YORK (AP)—In the nonprofit legal center Steven Schwartz runs from a converted furniture store in Northampton, Mass., the e-mail was very good news: By week's end, a check for \$243,000 would be on its way.

The money couldn't come soon enough. The sharp downturn in the economy had put Schwartz's group—working to improve treatment of teen offenders with mental illnesses—under very tight budget pressure. At least the check was a promise he could count on.

By that Thursday, though, events were unfolding 160 miles away that would upend those assumptions and assurances. In a federal courtroom in lower Manhattan, a Wall Street wizard stood before a judge, charged with running a \$50 billion fraud that targeted scores of wealthy and powerful investors.

The name of the accused, Bernard L. Madoff, meant nothing to Schwartz and why should it? He'd never heard of the money

manager with the beachfront mansion and the 55-foot yacht. They'd certainly never met. There was no reason to think they had anything in common.

Except, it turned out, the money.

In the days since Madoff's Dec. 11 arrest, the tale has repeatedly been told of wealthy victims who, perhaps naively, invested their trust in a man who promised financial miracles.

But the scale of the Madoff scandal can just as well be measured in its still-widening ripples, reaching far-flung people and causes—from a group helping just-released inmates find jobs in Rhode Island to another working to provide fresh food in poor neighborhoods in Detroit and Oakland, Calif.

Their future is now in jeopardy—a painful reminder of the financial web linking very different worlds.

Signing up companies for office space in Manhattan skyscrapers made Norman F.

Levy a very rich man.

In the hotly competitive but tight-knit world of New York commercial real estate, Levy worked across more than seven decades brokering leases in midtown's towers. When he died in 2005 at 93, he was hailed as an elder statesman of the trade whose zest for the deal was matched by his generosity with both friendship and money.

"Your spirit and love of life have touched and changed all who knew you," one friend of 40 years wrote in a paid death notice for Levy that ran in The New York Times. "You taught me so much. I'll cherish our relationship forever."

The friend was Bernard Madoff.

The real estate broker and the money manager were separated by 26 years, but they and their families had formed a friendship reinforced by shared interests, social circles—and trust.

Automakers grab loans and look to Obama White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—The long-term fate of the auto industry rests with Barack Obama now that President George W. Bush has given car companies \$17.4 billion in emergency rescue loans.

Simply letting the Big Three collapse was not an option amid a recession, housing slump and financial credit crunch, Bush said in announcing the short-term loans and demanding tough concessions from the automakers and their employees.

"By giving the auto companies a chance to restructure, we

will shield the American people from a harsh economic blow at a vulnerable time," the president said in his Saturday radio address.

"And we will give American workers an opportunity to show the world once again that they can meet challenges with ingenuity and determination, and emerge stronger than before."

The Detroit companies pledged to rebuild their once-mighty industry, though they acknowledged it would be tough to fight their way back from the brink of bankruptcy. If the carmakers fail to prove viability—a positive

cash flow and ability to make good on the loans—by March 31, they will be required to repay the government loans.

That's something they would find all but impossible to do.

Bush said the loans will give automakers three months to institute plans to restructure into viable companies "which we believe they are capable of doing."

He said if restructuring cannot be done outside bankruptcy, the loans will provide time for companies to make the legal and financial preparations needed for an "orderly" Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Canada offers \$3.29 billion auto bailout

TORONTO (AP)—The federal and Ontario governments will provide the Canadian subsidiaries of the Detroit Three automakers with 4 billion Canadian dollars (\$3.29 billion) in emergency loans, the prime minister said Saturday.

The announcement follows a pledge Friday by U.S. President George W. Bush to offer \$17.4 billion in emergency loans to General Motors Corp. and Chrysler LLC.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Canada's bailout plan, the equivalent of 20 percent of the U.S. aid package, will help keep the plants afloat while the automakers restructure their businesses to retain one of the country's most impor-

tant economic sectors.

"We cannot afford, in the United States or Canada, the catastrophic short-term collapse of the Big Three automakers. The U.S. has signaled that they are not going to allow these companies to fail, and we will do our share of the North American package to see that this doesn't happen either," said Harper speaking at a news conference in Toronto.

Canada's automotive industry represents 14 percent of the country's manufacturing output, 23 percent of manufactured exports, and directly employs more than 150,000 Canadians. The country's largest industry within the manufacturing sector, it has been suffering from

its slowest sales in 26 years and dwindling operating cash.

Ontario has agreed to provide 1.3 billion Canadian dollars (\$1.07 billion) of the total since the province alone employs about 400,000 auto sector workers—both directly and indirectly—and the industry is the mainstay of about 12 Ontario communities.

"In Ontario, we've got thousands of people and their families who rely on the auto industry to be on firm ground, so they can put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads. ... No state or province employs more workers, and we're not going to give that up," said Premier Dalton McGuinty, speaking alongside Harper Saturday.

Nation

Blagojevich case threatens new chief of staff

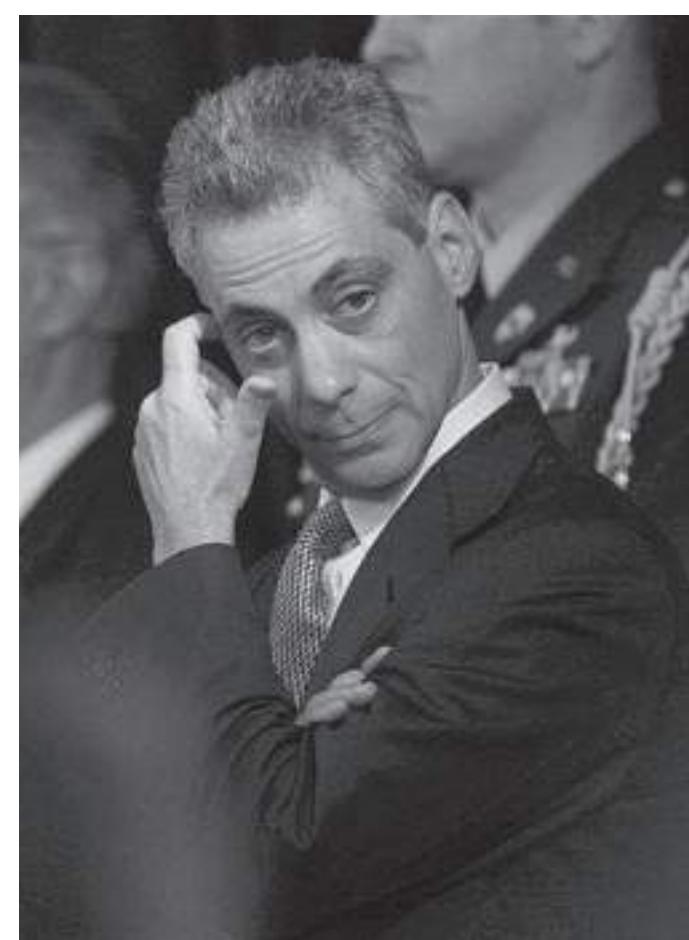
CHICAGO (AP)—Gov. Rod Blagojevich is legendary in Illinois political circles for not picking up the phone or returning calls, even from important figures like the state's senior senator, Dick Durbin.

But there was always one call Blagojevich regularly took, say his aides, and that was from Rahm Emanuel—his congressman, his one-time campaign adviser and, more recently—and troubling for Emanuel—one of his contacts with President-elect Barack Obama's transition staff.

The friendly rapport Blagojevich and Emanuel shared over the years has suddenly become a troubling liability for Emanuel and the new president he will serve as chief of staff.

Emanuel and Obama have remained silent about what, if anything, Emanuel knew of the governor's alleged efforts to peddle Obama's vacant Senate seat to the highest bidder.

Emanuel did contact the governor's office about the appointment and left Blagojevich with the impression that he was pushing Valerie Jarrett, a close Obama friend, so he wouldn't have to compete with her in the White House for Obama's attention, said a person close to Blagojevich. The person



In this Dec. 1, 2008 file photo, White House Chief of Staff designate Rahm Emanuel listens to President-elect Barack Obama, not pictured, speak at a news conference in Chicago.

was not authorized to talk about the governor's discussions regarding the vacancy and requested anonymity.

It was not clear whether Blagojevich inferred Emanuel's motive for advocating

Obama names four top members of science team

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Barack Obama's selection Saturday of a Harvard physicist and a marine biologist for science posts is a sign he plans a more aggressive response to global warming than did the Bush administration.

John Holdren and Jane Lubchenco are leading experts on climate change who have advocated forceful government action. Holdren will become Obama's science adviser as director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Lubchenco will lead the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees ocean and atmospheric

ic studies and does much of the government's research on global warming.

Holdren also will direct the president's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. Joining him as co-chairs will be Nobel Prize-winning scientist Harold Varmus, a former director of the National Institutes of Health, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Eric Lander, a specialist in human genome research.

"It's time we once again put science at the top of our agenda and worked to restore America's place as the world leader in science and technology," Obama said in announcing

Kennedy campaign takes page from Clinton

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP)—The start of Caroline Kennedy's "listening tour" was awfully hard to hear.

So far, her first foray into politics has been one of private meetings, brief appearances, and unanswered questions about what she would do, say and think if chosen as New York's next senator.

It's a similar strategy to the one Hillary Rodham Clinton employed successfully in 1999 to meet and listen to residents and politicians, but with a big difference: Kennedy's really campaigning for only one vot-

er—Democratic Gov. David Paterson. He has the sole responsibility for naming a successor if Clinton is confirmed as President-elect Barack Obama's secretary of state.

"It is not a campaign," Kennedy said after a private meeting with Democratic officials in Rochester.

Yet there is an intense lobbying effort under way to persuade the people who can persuade the governor to make her a senator.

In that, the 51-year-old daughter of the late President John F. Kennedy is no differ-

ent than the dozen or so other Senate hopefuls—but her effort has been far more closely scrutinized because she has never run for office and little is known about her politics, personality or priorities.

A big part of Kennedy's effort is trying to convince upstate political bosses that she sees beyond the skyscrapers of Manhattan. Upstate New Yorkers feel chronically ignored by New York's political leadership, especially now that the governor and both senators live in or near New York City.

 ACROSS THE NATION

Winter weather blasts nation from end to end

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—Successive waves of wintry weather gripped much of the country Saturday, frustrating holiday travelers from coast to coast and keeping the lights off for thousands of people who lost power after ice storms just days ago. Iowa public safety officials urged motorists not to travel as heavy snow began to fall in the morning. The state expected winds up to 35 miles per hour and wind chills of minus 25 just two days after being slammed with sleet, ice and snow. Washington state braced for hurricane-force winds as a storm blew in from the Pacific. The temperature dipped to minus 18 Saturday in Spokane, which expected up to 6 inches of snow on top of the 25 that fell over the past three days, said Johnny Burg, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

Passenger jet goes off Denver runway; 38 hurt

DENVER (AP)—A Continental Airlines jet taking off from Denver went off the runway and caught fire Saturday night, forcing passengers to evacuate on emergency slides and injuring nearly 40 people, officials said. No deaths were re-

ported, but 38 people were taken to hospitals, said Kim Day, Denver International Airport manager of aviation. No one was reported in critical condition. The cause of the accident was not immediately known. The weather in Denver was cold but not snowy when Continental Flight 1404 took off from Denver International Airport for Houston around 6:20 p.m. Ground crews put out the flames quickly, said airport spokesman Jeff Green. The 112 people on board made it out on through slides on the Boeing 737.

Surviving Houston octuplets turn 10 years old

HOUSTON (AP)—As the cake candles flickered, relatives and friends singing to seven surviving octuplets on their 10th birthday Saturday had to pause and consider after “happy birthday to ...”. They continued, “... dear everyone. Happy birthday to you!” The five girls and two boys, part of the world’s first set of octuplets born alive, stood behind their large, square cake—half vanilla and half chocolate—and blew out the candles with gusto, their days as preemies on respirators far behind them. All seven—girls Ebuka, Gorom, Chidi, Chima and Echerem, and their brothers Ikem and Jioke—were born three months prematurely in December 1998 at

a Houston hospital. Their weight at birth ranged from 11 ounces to 1 pound, 11 ounces. On Saturday, they acted like most children at a birthday party, eating cake and pizza, laughing, and running around with their 6-year-old sister Favor.

Post Office puts buffer between kids and ‘Santas’

NEW YORK (AP)—A sex offender is responsible for taking away some of the joy of the Postal Service’s Operation Santa program: Volunteers who answer children’s letters to Santa can no longer deliver gifts in person—or even know where they’re going. The program resumed Saturday morning in New York and Chicago, three days after it was abruptly suspended after a postal worker in Maryland recognized one volunteer as a registered offender. A postal inspector intervened before the individual could answer a child’s letter, but officials decided changes had to be made. It was a shocking moment for the effort, which started in New York’s main post office in the 1920s. Back then, postal clerks answered Santa’s mail, buying food and toys for children. Over the years, the number of letters increased, and the program was opened to the public in post offices around the country.

 ACROSS THE NATION

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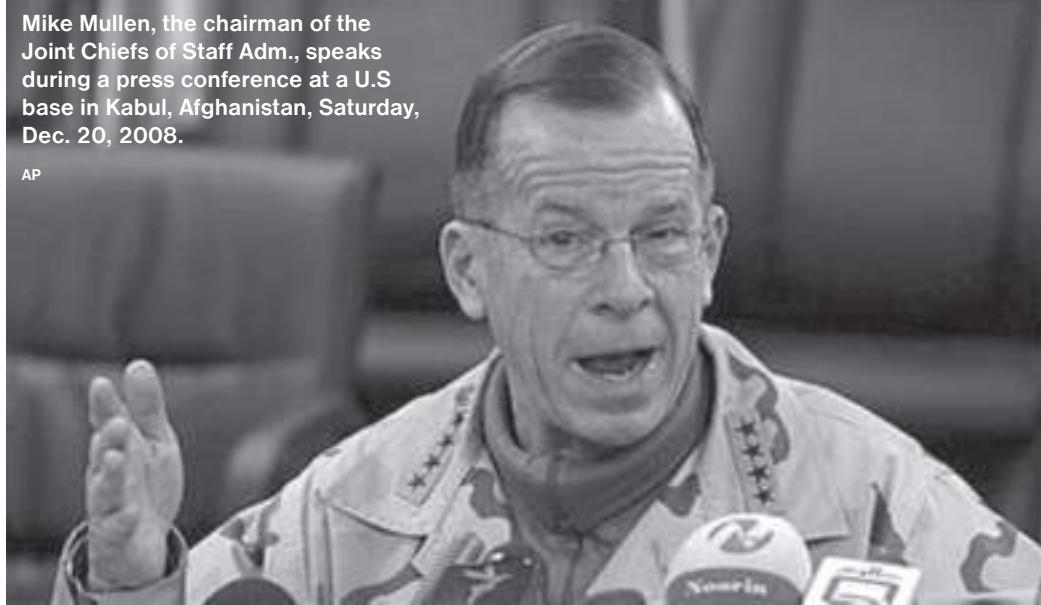
* On approved credit (O.A.C.). Some conditions apply. Doc fees and registration not included. Can not be combined with any other offer. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for more details. 2009 Mazda 3i: Total price is \$16,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 11.25% A.P.R. for 60 monthly payments of \$297.31 or \$137 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is \$17,838.60. 2008 Mazda B2300: Total price is \$18,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 11.25% A.P.R. for 60 monthly payments of \$332.30 or \$153 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is \$19,939.00. 2009 Hyundai Tucson: Total price is \$17,995 less 20% down payment. Financed at 11.25% A.P.R. for 60 monthly payments of \$314.80 or \$145 per paycheck based on 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is \$18,888.00.

Asia

Afghanistan could get up to 30K new US troops

Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm., speaks during a press conference at a U.S. base in Kabul, Afghanistan, Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008.

AP



KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—The top U.S. military officer said Saturday that the Pentagon could double the number of American forces in Afghanistan by next summer to 60,000—the largest estimate of potential reinforcements ever publicly suggested.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that between 20,000 and 30,000 additional U.S. troops could be sent to Afghanistan to bolster

the 31,000 already there.

This year has been the deadliest for U.S. forces in Afghanistan since the 2001 invasion to oust the Taliban for hosting al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. Suicide attacks and roadside bombs have become more dangerous, and Taliban fighters have infiltrated wide swaths of countryside and now roam in provinces on Kabul's doorstep.

U.S. commanders have long

requested an additional 20,000 troops to aid Canadian and British forces in two provinces just outside Kabul and in the south. But the high end of Mullen's range is the largest number any top U.S. military official has said could be sent to Afghanistan.

Mullen said that increase would include combat forces but also aviation, medical and civilian affairs support troops.

door of prime ministers, many of whom were forced from office by months of demonstrations aimed at ridding the government of Thaksin's allies.

But his 35-member Cabinet includes picks that critics have already said will make it harder to unite the deeply divided nation—largely split between the middle class that is his base and the rural poor who backed Thaksin.

Thailand's new government endorsed by king

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Thailand's prime minister unveiled his new Cabinet Saturday including a supporter of last month's airport blockade, a lineup that cast doubt on the government's ability to unite the divided nation.

The announcement came after King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the country's revered monarch, endorsed Abhisit Vejjaji-

va, whom lawmakers voted in as prime minister on Dec. 15. The Cabinet was announced on national television and will be sworn in Monday.

Abhisit is Thailand's third leader in four months—and the first opponent of ex-Premier Thaksin Shinawatra to lead a civilian government in seven years. His selection raised hopes that he would stop the revolving

ASIAN BRIEFS

China to send 3 ships to Somalia to battle pirates

BEIJING (AP)—China's navy will send three ships to the waters off Somalia this week to protect Chinese vessels and crews from pirate attacks, state media said. Two destroyers and a supply ship will leave the island province of Hainan in southern China on Dec. 26, the official Xinhua News Agency said. They will patrol the Gulf of Aden and areas off the Somali coast, Foreign Ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao, said in a statement issued late Saturday. "Their major task is to protect the safety of Chinese ships and crew on board as well as ships carrying humanitarian relief material for international organizations," Liu said. Piracy has taken an increasingly costly toll on international shipping, especially in the Gulf of Aden, one of the world's busiest sea lanes. Spurred by widespread poverty in their homeland, the pirates have made an estimated \$30 million hijacking ships for ransom this year, seizing more than 40 vessels off Somalia's 1,880-mile (3,000-kilometer) coastline.

Pakistan: Militants kill 3 in latest convoy attack

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Militants in Pakistan launched rockets at two trucks returning from delivering fuel to Western forces in Afghanistan, killing three people, an official said Saturday—the latest in a string of attacks targeting a supply route critical to the U.S. fight against the Taliban. U.S. and NATO forces in landlocked Afghanistan transport up to 75 percent of their supplies through Pakistan, and any serious disruption of that pipeline could hamper operations. American officials have so far said the uptick in attacks has not affected their ability to operate in Afghanistan so far, but have acknowledged they are looking for ways to improve security along the route and are investigating alternative ways to deliver supplies. Militants struck the oil tankers Friday as they traveled through the Khyber Pass, said Fazal Mehmood, a government official in the lawless Pakistani tribal area for which the route is named.

Tight security as Mumbai hotels prepare to reopen

MUMBAI, India (AP)—Doormen in white suits and black turbans greeted visitors to the Oberoi with a bow on the eve of the hotel's reopening three weeks after it was targeted in a militant rampage. Security was noticeably tighter as guards scanned bags and sniffer dogs patrolled the ground outside. Armed policemen stood watch among bunkers of sandbags outside the entrance to the hotel's Trident portion, where the owners said 100 rooms would reopen on Sunday, just weeks after 10 suspected Islamic militants stormed sites across India's financial capital. Inside the Oberoi, private security guards manned all lobby entrances, passing bags through metal detectors and X-ray scanners. Journalists' ID cards were checked against a press list, and reporters and photographers were patted down by hand—a far cry from the relaxed atmosphere at the luxury Oberoi before the attacks.

World

Iraq parliament rejects draft law on non-US troops

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's parliament rejected for the second time Saturday a draft law allowing foreign troops from countries other than the United States to remain after the end of the year, lawmakers said.

The law drafted by the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki would allow all foreign troops other than Americans to stay in Iraq until the end of July 2009. It was rejected earlier in the week and is expected to be approved in an

other vote after Christmas.

Those opposed to the draft law were primarily lawmakers loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

A separate agreement approved recently by the Iraqi government and parliament allows the U.S. to retain troops in the country until the end of 2011. The accord, which takes effect on January 1, gives Iraq strict oversight over the nearly 150,000 American troops now in the country.

"Voting was carried out in parliament on the draft law and it was rejected and turned back to the government," Kurdish lawmaker Mahmoud Othman said.

Britain will withdraw its 4,000 troops by the end of May. After the Dec. 31 expiration of the U.N. mandate authorizing military operations in Iraq, the only coalition troops to remain will be the U.S., Britain, Australia, El Salvador, Estonia and Romania.

after revolution

Soviet Union.

Since Castro declared victory on New Year's Day, 1959, the day after Batista fled the country, his rule has prevailed through 10 U.S. presidents, the U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion, a world-shaking missile crisis, the U.S. embargo, the Soviet collapse and the onslaught of globalization. Now 82, he is ailing and out of sight but still the head of the Communist Party of Cuba. Raul Castro, his successor as president, is taking baby steps toward change and vowing to fend off any challenge to his brother's legacy.



Castro

Aging Castro still rules 50 years

HAVANA (AP)—In the palace of a fallen dictator, the grade-school kids in

their red Communist Pioneer bandanas are getting their mandatory introduction to the glories of the revolution. Clattering from one display case to the next, they gaze wide-eyed at an antique gun, a fighter's bloodied shirt, the engine of a downed U.S. spy plane.

Moving on, they stare at the yacht named Granma that carried Fidel Castro back from exile to launch his guerrilla

war, and the combat boots his brother-successor wore as a ponytailed 27-year-old rebel.

The palace of Fulgencio Batista, the ruler whom Castro overthrew, is now the Museum of the Revolution, and these 6- and 7-year-olds are the heirs to a communist government about to turn 50—a system that may be softening at the edges but appears determined to crush any threat to its grip on power, lest it crumble like its one-time godfather, the

WORLD BRIEFS

Mauritanian president taken by security forces

NOUAKCHOTT, Mauritania (AP)—The daughter of Mauritania's recently deposed president says security forces have taken her father from his village in the middle of the night. A police official says President Sidi Cheikh Abdallahi was taken into custody at around 3:30 a.m. Sunday morning. He is being driven to the country's capital where he will be freed. The official asked not to be named because he is not authorized to speak to the press. Abdallahi has been under house arrest since a military junta grabbed power in an Aug. 6 coup. Both the United States and France canceled aid to the country following the coup, demanding Abdallahi's release. He has been under 24-hour surveillance for 5 1/2 months, first in a villa in the capital and later in his native village.

Israel strikes Gaza day after truce expires

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—An Israeli airstrike against a Palestinian rocket squad killed a militant Saturday, the first death in Gaza since Hamas formally declared an end to a six-month truce. Palestinians fired 10 rockets and at least 23 mortar shells from Gaza into Israel, causing some property damage but no casualties, the Israeli military said. An Israeli airstrike at one of the rocket

squads in northern Gaza killed a militant, said the army and Palestinian medics. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the armed wing of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement, identified the dead man as one of its fighters. Hamas, which controls Gaza, said it was behind the mortar fire. A six-month truce that expired Friday had curbed violence between Israel and Hamas in Gaza though sporadic fighting has continued. Hamas declared Friday that it would not continue the truce.

Australian former Guantanamo Bay detainee freed

SYDNEY, Australia (AP)—Authorities on Sunday lifted the last remaining restrictions on an Australian man who spent more than five years as an inmate at Guantanamo Bay and admitted assisting the al-Qaida terrorist network. David Hicks, a 33-year-old ex-kangaroo Skinner and Outback cowboy, was held in U.S. custody at the military detention center in Cuba before striking a plea deal that returned him home to Australia to serve a nine-month sentence. Hicks was released a year ago after completing the sentence for providing support for terrorism, but was placed under a strict court order that required him to report to police three days a week, observe a curfew and banned him from using any telephone or Internet account not approved by

police. The order expired at midnight Saturday. Australian Federal Police, which had sought the original order citing national security reasons, said last month it had decided not to ask a court to renew the restrictions.

Iranians celebrate longest night of the year

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iranians recited poetry, shared stories and ate fruits and nuts Saturday during all-night celebrations of the longest night of the year, a tradition going back thousands of years to when Zoroastrianism was the predominant religion of ancient Persia. For many Iranians, no matter their religion, language and race, celebrate Yalda, as he stood in a long line at a confectionary shop in north Tehran to buy sweets and dry fruit. Zoroastrianism's central theme is the struggle between the good spirit Ahura Mazda and the evil Ahriman. Yalda, marked on the winter solstice, recognizes the symbolic victory of light over darkness as day time starts growing longer and nights become shorter. In the streets of the capital, Tehran, fruit vendors enjoyed their busiest day of the year, and confectionaries were packed with customers buying up provisions for the feast.

Health & Fitness

Grossed out by holiday potlucks? Join the crowd

By JEANNINE STEIN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

The holiday potluck may seem like an innocent, inexpensive way to throw a party, where friends and colleagues can share favorite recipes, savor an unusual dish or indulge a sweet tooth. But in that spread some people see only a minefield of food-poisoning bacteria waiting to wreak havoc. Los Angeles publicist Nilou Salimpour-Davidov sums up her feelings about potlucks this way: "I think they're good for one thing: to minimize your calorie intake. They make me lose my appetite."

Instead of blithely helping themselves to mounds of casserole and slices of meatloaf, potluck haters head straight for the store-bought cookies, breads and beverages. They insist their aversion to homemade food isn't capricious. Eating turkey and stuffing made by the co-worker who doesn't wash his hands after using the bathroom or the gingerbread trifle created by the friend whose clothes are perpetually covered in pet hair is asking for trouble, they say. Even if the preparers seem clean enough, hardly anyone is as scrupulous as they should be in the kitchen, washing pots and utensils improperly and failing to keep foods at the right temperatures. And who knows what their rules are about tasting the dish while cooking?

One woman tells of listening to a hostess boast about how her 3-year-old triplets helped make the dish. Another recalls the horror of seeing the dirt-encrusted kitchen of a former co-worker—one who loved to entertain.

Dr. Roshan Reporter, a medical epidemiologist with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, acknowledges that potlucks can be risky. Although the department gets far fewer reports of food poisoning from potlucks than it does from restaurants, she says, those numbers ratchet up a bit around the holidays, when potlucks are in full swing.

And many illnesses may go unreported. People can be reluctant to squeal on a friend, family member or co-worker, usually putting the blame instead on something store-bought.

"Most of the time they don't want to get someone in trouble," she says.

The department will investigate potluck food-poisoning incidents if there seems to be enough evidence to pin it on food (sometimes it's just a sick partygoer spreading germs). "If we had a whole group of people who were sick, we might do an outbreak investigation and look at the whole menu."

So, just what diseases can you get from tainted food? The national Centers for Dis-

ease Control and Prevention list the following as the top three most common types of food-borne illnesses:

■ **Campylobacter:** Contamination from this bacterial pathogen can come from eating undercooked chicken or other foods tainted with raw chicken juices (hence the need to thoroughly wash cutting boards and knives). It can cause fever, abdominal cramps and diarrhea.

■ **Salmonella:** This bacteria commonly is found in the intestinal tracts of animals and can cause fever, abdominal cramps and diarrhea, but those with compromised immune systems could fare worse, even die. People most often get salmonella poisoning by eating food contaminated by animal feces; if meat isn't cooked to the proper temperature, the bacteria might not be killed off.

■ **E. coli:** Cow-feces-contaminated food and water are common culprits here; when humans come in contact with the bacteria, they can experience diarrhea, abdominal cramps and, in more severe cases, bleeding, kidney failure and temporary anemia.

But actual risk has little to do with the aversion. Many potluck haters acknowledge that they've never had a single terrible food-poisoning incident that drove them away—they're simply skeeved out by the whole idea.

Salimpour-Davidov was reared by a pediatrician father whose frequent hand washing drilled into her the notion that bacteria are just waiting for an opportunity to get you. "Ever since I was young, I remember him being adamant about refrigerating food and not letting it sit overnight," she says. That contributed to her loathing of potlucks.

Now she has a simple strategy: Eat beforehand, and be extremely selective at the party.

But she never cops an attitude. "There's always a way to be a nice guest at a party," she says, "especially around the holidays. You can always put a little something on your plate and nibble on things you find safe and healthy for you."

What is deemed "safe" varies by potluck hater.

Rachel Duncan, a Los Angeles-based project engineer for a construction company, is mostly OK with food that comes straight from the oven.

"I say to myself, 'Well, that killed the germs.' But those decorated cookies with junk on top—someone has been putting that on there with their hands. It's been overly touched, and that gives me the creeps."

Sometimes she'll give herself a pep talk, push through her fears and eat the homemade fare, especially if she thinks people might take offense if she doesn't. "It grosses me out, but I do it," she says. Otherwise, she tries sticking with things that are fairly low-risk. A bucket of cookies from Albertsons? Good. Homemade chocolate chip cookies? Bad.

Duncan recently drew the line at a company cookout. "I work on a job site with big trailers," she explains, "and we have field people and electricians and construction workers who use outhouses all day long. We had a barbecue and people are grilling burgers. Everyone's being funny about it, saying, 'Rachel, you don't think we wash our hands?' But I couldn't eat the burgers." Her co-workers, she says, weren't offended.

She doesn't even like to take

food to such events, usually offering paper goods, utensils or drinks instead. Although she's meticulous in her own kitchen, she doesn't feel comfortable driving, say, cooked meat across town. "That grosses me out," she says. "That's what I tell people: It's not you, it's me. It's not sanitary to bring food in the car—and then you have to stop and get gas?"

Los Angeles publicist Steve Valentine gives potluck participants the once-over.

"If someone is well-groomed, I would definitely try their dish," he says. "It would lead me to think that they understood about cleanliness and had some knowledge and sophistication about preparing that dish and taking ownership of it. If someone came in with a dish and they were sloppy and their hair was a mess, I would not eat their food."

Valentine constructed a food triangle hierarchy that he uses to assess which potluck foods he'll tackle. At the top are crudites and salads and other foods that are served as close to their original state as possible. Further down are simple recipe-based dishes: "I prefer it when hands haven't touched it that much, and I don't have to worry about the intellectual capability of the person making the dish." At the bottom are casseroles with strange, meat-like ingredients.

Dr. Jonathan Fielding, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, understands such squeamishness—even if he doesn't share it. "People not using the right kind of personal hygiene, not adequately storing food at the right temperature—at a potluck, that would be a concern," he says.

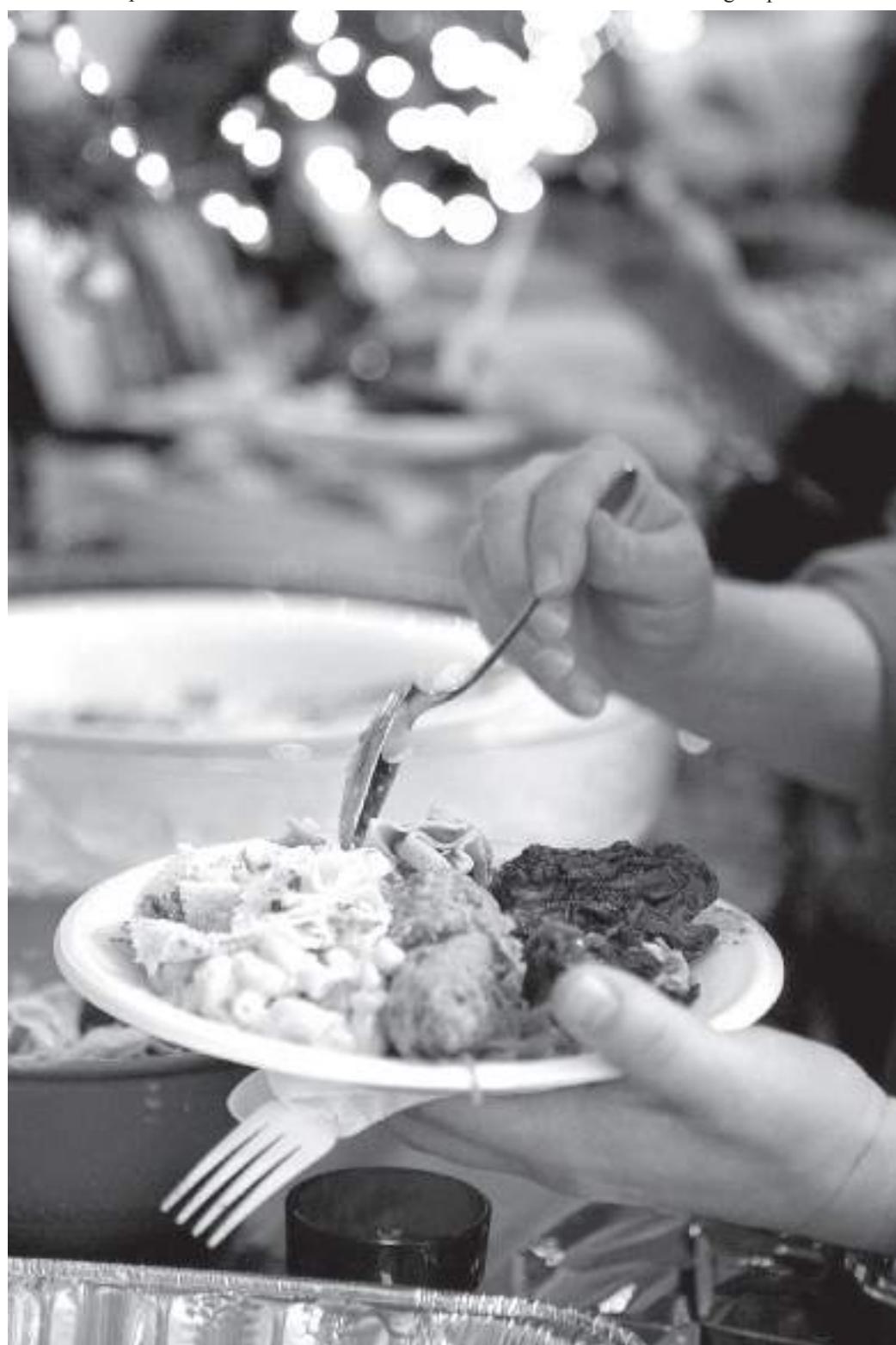
Survey: Eating a bit better

By JEANNINE STEIN
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Americans are getting savvier about eating right and exercising, according to a nationwide survey of 783 men and women by the American Dietetic Association, "Nutrition and You: Trends 2008."

When asked about maintaining a healthful diet and engaging in regular exercise, 43 percent said, "I'm already doing it." In 2002, that number was 38 percent. People in the "I know

I should" category—who understand a healthy lifestyle is critical but haven't done much to achieve it—numbered 38 percent, up from 30 percent in 2002. And just 19 percent of men and women put themselves in the "don't bother me" category—not believing that diet and exercise are important. That's



Holiday potlucks are not always joyful occasions.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Life & Style

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

A quaint, little store peddling antique and artsy stuff has recently opened on the first floor of the Marianas Business Plaza.

Fu Dogs & Qi is the brainchild of 14-year Saipan resident Ashley Moffatt-Uys and it opened last Nov. 6.

She says Fu Dogs & Qi was borne out of her passion for antiques and the arts.

"It's absolutely my passion. I've been a corporate art consultant for 30 years. I've worked with art. I'm involved with the arts all the time. Some of the things that I don't get to work with so much are the actual objects. This is my opportunity to get back into that part of my passion that I feel strongly about. To bring the objects, accessories, and the smaller pieces that I have such a passion for and that

Best-sellers

Moffatt-Uys said surprisingly Fu Dogs & Qi had been well received in the first one and a half months of operation as friends and complete strangers have visited the store and bought items.

Asked what items have been the most popular, she said antique blue and white wedding jars seem to be a favorite.

"It really depends on what day of the week it is as to what sells the best. I've always been passionate about antique blue and white porcelain. So we have quite a few wedding jars that have been sold, which are lovely gifts."

She said when a couple gets married in Asia friends and family usually want to get them off to a good start so they put together things that the couple might need in the kitchen—different kinds of cured meats, different vege-



MARK RABAGO

Antique bird and cricket cages as well as textiles are also in display.

I have collected throughout my life," she said.

A former ballerina, Moffatt-Uys hopes her store will fill a need in the island community, which for so many years has been bereft of the arts and antiques.

"Saipan needed a good antique store. There really aren't any on the island. There are a few stores with a couple of antiques but there really isn't any arts and antique store on island and I thought we needed one," she said.



MARK RABAGO

Marlon Regaton shows off some of the antique bells for sale.

FU DOGS & QI

A new shop selling 'old' stuff



MARK RABAGO

Fu Dogs & Qi owner Ashley Moffatt-Uys poses with a cabinet-full of antique blue and white wedding jars.



MARK RABAGO

Antique singing jars can be both soothing to the eyes and to the body.



MARK RABAGO

Antique Fu Dogs and cast iron horses on display.

he uses a lot of energy. He works with the energy in the body. So by way of incorporating his desires and mine together I came up with Fu Dogs & Qi.

Broad price range

Moffatt-Uys said contrary to popular belief, antique stores are not out of reach of the ordinary man as Fu Dogs & Qi has a very broad price range.

"Most of our pieces range from about \$35 to \$350. We do have things that are a little more expensive but that tends to be our price range. It's a very broad price range and there's seems to be something for just about everybody in here," she said.

The store also carries odd items, beautiful fans, little trinkets, and jewelry that retail between \$5 to \$15.

Moffatt-Uys said she is unfazed about the current economic climate of the islands and said if she thought about the crisis she wouldn't have opened Fu Dogs & Qi at all.

"If I'd been worried about it, it would probably have stopped me from opening the store. I believe there is always a need and desire to find beautiful objects of art. They fill our souls. They make us who we are. I guess I just threw caution to the wind and I knew that this being my passion, people will eventually come also."

Moffatt-Uys is inviting everyone to drop by her store and check the antique and art items on sale up until Christmas Eve.

She assured that it will be an experience they will soon not forget.

"Coming into my store is sort of dipping your toe into the past and experiencing a lot of different things from the art that was prevalent during the time. We are really art and antique because there's quite a fine line between art and antique. It's kind of a blurry line."

Fu Dogs & Qi's operating hours are from noon to 8pm Monday to Saturday and aside from selling Asian antiques, accessories, fine arts, and textiles it also peddles healing tools.

Ho-Ho-Ho, You're on stage ... at airport karaoke

HOUSTON (AP)—This the season for red-capped Santas and red-nosed reindeers. Sleigh bells ringing and snowflakes glistening. Stockings carefully hung and yuletide carols being sung ... in an airport terminal. With a karaoke machine.

Ho-ho-ho, hold that flight. There's a holiday surprise for travelers—and aspiring performers—passing through Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport this month.

There it is, just past the security checkpoint, set atop a small stage: a karaoke machine adorned with Christmas lights and stockings shaped like cowboy boots. There's even a team of Christmas elves—airport employees the rest of the year.

"A little holiday karaoke while you wait? It's fun and it's free," cooed Ashley Thompson. "You could be a star."

This is the first year the airport has included holiday-themed karaoke among its array of seasonal musical entertainment, which includes school choirs and local bands. The karaoke booth is being set up five times around the airport this month.

On a Thursday morning just after a rare snowfall had frosted Houston, the holiday spirit—or perhaps, the thrill of performing in front of strangers—was strong among airport employees and travelers with time to kill. One after another, crooners stepped up to the microphone and belted out holiday classics—each putting their own mark on the melodies.

A tiny boy in a Goofy T-shirt squeaked out a rendition of "Feliz Navidad," with his mother kneeling by his side singing harmony. A dark-haired songstress vamped her way through a coquettish "Santa Baby." A pair of blonde-haired gymnasts opened their version of "Jingle Bells" with synchronized handstands.

"I would do that but I haven't stretched yet," joked Jeff Zimbelman, 26, as he took the stage to perform "O Holy Night."

As Zimbelman's pitch-perfect voice lilted through the terminal, harried travelers rushing through metal detectors stopped, stared and smiled, and a crowd gathered around the stage.

Zimbelman, an insurance adjuster from Sacramento, Calif.,



Airline passengers walk past a sign for a holiday karaoke event at George Bush Intercontinental Airport Thursday, Dec. 11, 2008 in Houston.

said he loves karaoke, but usually performs at a bar, and only after a few drinks.

"Doing this in the middle of an airport is kinda ... different," said Zimbelman, returning home after four months in Houston working with victims of Hurricane Ike. "But this is kind of neat. Every airport should do

something like this."

Airport employee Rob Mason came up with the idea and offered the use of a karaoke machine he takes to his mother's nursing home. The silver-haired, velvet-voiced Mason also serves as emcee for the festivities, which he attends outfitted in a tuxedo and bow tie.

"It's so cool we can sing snow songs in Houston," Mason intoned as he introduced a trio of blue-suited businessman, Mike Allen, Brian Evetts and Jeff Steel. "Welcome aboard, gentle- man. Welcome to the stage."

The three Dallas-area T-Mobile employees, on a day trip to Houston for business, lined

up sheepishly behind the microphones and launched into "Frosty the Snowman."

"Thumpety thump thump. Thumpety thump thump," they sang, breaking into chuckles at the lyrics. "Look at Frosty go. Thumpety thump thump. Thumpety thump thump."

"I did some coercing of my co-workers to get them up there. We don't usually do karaoke. And after other people hear us, they know why," Steel said after stepping off the stage. "This really lightens up holiday travel."

For Nancy Flood, a flight attendant for Republic Air, the karaoke was welcome entertainment as her flight to Philadelphia was more than four hours late and there was no sign it would depart anytime soon.

She settled down to watch the karaoke and signed up to sing "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer."

"There's no better thing I've seen in any airport, and I've been everywhere," said Flood, 48. "In this economy, there is nothing better than seeing smiles like this. It shouldn't just be for Christmas."

Boom in music video games helps original artists

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"This song is dedicated to Debbie Harry," flinty-eyed Lisa Hsuan purrs into a microphone on the red-lit stage of Hyperion Tavern. It's a cozy dive where patrons drink Coke and beer from bottles and a fading chandelier dangles overhead.

Her tribute is intentionally ludicrous: The 30-year-old veterinarian is about to belt out "Call Me," which Harry—fronting the group Blondie—released 28 years ago. Accompanied on fake guitars and drums by three Web programmers who drove in from the refinery-dotted coastal suburb of El Segundo, Hsuan launches in as a smoke machine puffs nearby.

They're playing the video game "Rock Band 2," which along with "Guitar Hero" is rocking bars and living rooms across the country. Many songs' sales have more than doubled after release in one of the games, and well-known bands have started lining up to provide new music direct to the game makers. Now record labels—noticing what they are missing, and struggling as compact disc sales tumble—are looking for a bigger piece of the action.

Although labels get some royalties from the play-along games' makers, they are often bypassed on image and likeness licensing deals, which the bands control and which account for a rising proportion of musicians' income. Meanwhile,

they're expected to keep growing.

Aerosmith made more money off the June release of "Guitar Hero: Aerosmith" than either of its last two albums, according to Kai Huang, co-founder of RedOctane, which first developed "Guitar Hero."

"The kind of exposure that artists can get through the Guitar Hero platform is huge," said Huang, who remains RedOctane's president, after it and the "Guitar Hero" franchise were taken over by Activision Blizzard Inc. in 2006. "Rock Band," meanwhile, is made by Viacom Inc.'s MTV Games and distributed by Electronic Arts Inc.

Though Warner Music Group Corp. Chief Executive Edgar Bronfman Jr. bemoaned the "very patry" licensing fees record labels get from game makers in August, the labels haven't stopped sending their music to game makers.

That's partly because they lack leverage. Even the largest label, Universal Music Group, controls just a third of the U.S. market, said Wedbush Morgan entertainment analyst Michael Pachter.

"There are literally probably 2 million songs out there, and fewer than a 1,000 were used in these two games combined in these last two years," Pachter said. "If Warner wants to say we'll take our 20 percent of the market and go away, a lot of bands are going to leave the label if they think they can get better exposure

by being on these games."

Artists from Nirvana to the Red Hot Chili Peppers have seen sales of their music more than double after being released on the games. Some bands are featured on special editions—like Aerosmith on "Guitar Hero" this year and, soon, The Beatles with MTV Games—and last month, The Killers released two new songs on "Guitar Hero" the same time their latest album came out.

"It's a way to save the mu-

game-formatted discs.

"You actually have to buy the music," he said. "You can't just rip it and put it on (file-sharing site) Limewire."

The addictive play-along games are a cross between karaoke and open-mike night. Players hear an approximation of a song and try to match colorful visual cues by pressing buttons on a guitar-like plastic game controller, pounding touch-sensitive rubber drums and



Guitar Hero and Rock Band 2 video game bundles are seen on display at a GameStop store in Redwood City, Calif., Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2008.

sic industry," said Grant Lau, a 40-year-old bar worker who started the play-along night at the Hyperion three years ago for a friend who owns the bar.

Lau points out the games protect artists and recording companies from piracy because buyers have to own the console equipment to enjoy new music, which they must purchase through sanctioned game sites or on special

singing into a specialized mike. Successful performances sound quite like the originals.

"As soon as you play it, you like it a lot more, and then you buy it," said Tan Doan, a 26-year-old Web developer from Long Beach. While playing "Rock Band" at the Hyperion every Wednesday, he discovered The All-American Rejects, got hooked on the band and then

they were anticipating."

The predecessor, "Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock," raked in \$750 million between fall 2007 and this fall.

The revenues don't stop there.

Users have downloaded game-playable songs more than 55 million times, some free but most around \$1.99 each, since the games launched, and new titles come out each week.

Promoters have even brought the game into the real world with a "Rock Band Live" concert tour.

Concert tracking magazine Pollstar said 2,900 fans paid \$25 to \$36 each to rock the Event Center at San Jose State University on Oct. 11, one stop on a 26-stop tour by four bands—Panic at the Disco, Dashboard Confessional, the Plain White Ts and The Cab—who performed between renditions of songs played by local "Rock Band" contest winners.

"The tour was designed for our MTV audience," said Paul DeGooyer, MTV's senior vice president of electronic games and music. "It got a very good reception. In all respects, it points the way forward for 'Rock Band' to take its place in the musical ecosystem."

The games' appeal is clear for the amateur who aspires to a higher musical calling.

Alex Morsy, a 26-year-old Web developer who played backup last month at Hyperion on a number of tunes, said the games fulfill his interest in playing music notwithstanding his lack of talent.

"I'm tone deaf," he said in a break between songs. "I tried learning piano one year but I totally sucked at it. I'm not very musically inclined, so this is fun."

Bolshoi ballerina Olga Lepeshinskaya dies at 92

MOSCOW (AP)—Olga Lepeshinskaya, the Bolshoi Ballet's prima ballerina for three decades during the Soviet times, has died at the age of 92.

Nataliya Uvarova, a spokeswoman for Russia's Culture

Ministry, said Lepeshinskaya died Saturday of an unspecified illness. The ITAR-Tass news agency reported that Lepeshinskaya died in her Moscow apartment in her sleep.

Lepeshinskaya was born to

a noble family in Kiev in 1916. When she first tried to enter the Bolshoi choreographic school, she was rejected.

The school admitted her shortly afterward, in 1925, and Lepeshinskaya graduated in

1933, immediately joining the Bolshoi Ballet. She was rumored to be the favorite ballerina of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, and received the coveted Stalin Prize on four occasions.

Lepeshinskaya recalled in an interview published in the daily Rossiyskaya Gazeta in 2006 that Stalin once affectionately called her "dragonfly."

As Bolshoi's prima, Lepeshinskaya danced Kitri in "Don Quixote," Tao Hoa in "The Red Poppy," Jeanne in "The Flame of Paris," Aurora in "Sleeping Beauty" and Masha in "The Nutcracker" among other parts.

She said that Kitri, first performed in 1940, was her first big success and she was so eager to dance that she asked her friends to hold her offstage so that she wouldn't enter ahead of time.

During World War II, Lepeshinskaya participated in the Bolshoi's traveling company, which performed before Red Army soldiers on the front line.

She recalled in the 2006 interview that she broke her leg during the first performance of "The Red Poppy" in 1953, but managed to complete her part despite four fractures diagnosed later.

Lepeshinskaya married Soviet general Alexei Antonov in 1956. In 1962, when her hus-

band died, she temporarily lost her sight. "During the funerals, I had a nervous breakdown and everything went black before my eyes," she recalled in the interview.

In 1963, she left the Bolshoi Ballet and turned to teaching, spending several years in East Germany before returning to the Soviet Union.

Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev offered his condolences to Lepeshinskaya's relatives, the Kremlin said.

Bolshoi's premier danc-

er, Nikolai Tsiskaridze, said Lepeshinskaya's death was a "great loss."

"She will stay in our memory as a virtuoso dancer," he said, according to ITAR-Tass.

Bolshoi's prima, Svetlana Zakharova, said dancers of today would find it impossible to match Lepeshinskaya's fiery manner. "No one can repeat her tempo now," Zakharova said on NTV television.

Uvarova said Lepeshinskaya will be buried Tuesday in Moscow's Vvedenskoye cemetery.



Renowned Russian ballerina Olga Lepeshinskaya is seen in Moscow in this April 22, 1985, file photo.

Jermaine Dupri says Janet Jackson is not pregnant

NEW YORK (AP)—Jermaine Dupri wants to clear up some misconceptions. In an entry on his blog, the music producer says he and girlfriend Janet Jackson haven't split up—and she isn't pregnant. Dupri writes: "As you all know Janet is a very private person ... the only reason you see her as much as you do on my YouTube vlog is because of me. LOL. But I hear y'all and your questions. ... No she is not pregnant and yes we're still together."

Jackson and Dupri have been dating for about four years.

Dupri also writes: "It baffles me how y'all let these blog and magazines control your lifes."

Jackson canceled a string of concerts on her Rock Witchu tour this fall because of a bout of migraine-associated vertigo, which is characterized by dizziness, imbalance and other symptoms.



In this Sept. 23, 2008 file photo, singer Janet Jackson and record producer Jermaine Dupri arrive at a private party celebrating Dupri's 36th birthday in New York.

Music industry drops effort to sue song swappers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The group representing the U.S. recording industry said Friday it has abandoned its policy of suing people for sharing songs protected by copyright and will work with Internet service providers to cut abusers' access if they ignore repeated warnings.

The move ends a controversial program that saw the Recording Industry Association of America sue about 35,000 people since 2003 for swapping songs online. Because of high legal costs for defenders, virtually all of those hit with lawsuits settled, on average for around \$3,500. The association's legal costs, in the meantime, exceeded the settlement money it brought in.

The association said Friday that it stopped sending out new lawsuits and warnings in August, and then agreed with several leading U.S. Internet service providers, without naming which ones, to notify alleged illegal file-sharers and cut off service if they failed to stop.

It credited the lawsuit campaign with raising awareness of piracy and keeping the number of illegal file-sharers in check while the legal market for digital music took off. With two weeks left in the year, legitimate sales

of digital music tracks soared for the first time past the 1 billion mark, up 28 percent over all of last year, according to Nielsen Soundscan.

"We're at a point where there's a sense of comfort that we can replace one form of deterrent with another form of deterrent," said RIAA Chairman and Chief Executive Mitch Bainwol. "Filing lawsuits as a strategy to deal with a big problem was not our first choice five years ago."

The new notification program is also more efficient, he said, having sent out more notices in the few months since it started than in the five years of the lawsuit campaign.

"It's much easier to send notices than it is to file lawsuits," Bainwol said.

The decision to scrap the legal attack was first reported in The Wall Street Journal.

The group says it will still continue to litigate outstanding cases, most of which are in the pre-lawsuit warning stage, but some of which are before the courts.

The decision to press on with existing cases drew the ire of Harvard Law professor Charles Nesson, who is defending a Boston University graduate student targeted in one of the music industry's lawsuits.

"If it's a bad idea, it's a bad idea," said Nesson. He is challenging the constitutionality of the suits, which, based on the Digital Theft Deterrence and Copyright Damages Improvement Act of 1999, can impose damages of \$150,000 per infringement, far in excess of the actual damage caused.

Nesson's client, Joel Tenenbaum, faces the possibility of more than \$1 million in damages for allegedly downloading seven songs illegally, which Nesson called "cruel and unusual punishment." The case is set to go to trial in district court in Massachusetts on Jan. 22.

Brian Toder, a lawyer with Chestnut & Cambronne in Minneapolis, who defended single mother Jammie Thomas in a copyright suit filed by the RIAA, said he is also set to retry the case March 9 after a judge threw out a \$222,000 decision against her.

"I think it's a good thing that they've ended this campaign of going after people," Toder said.

"But they need to change how people spend money on records," he said. "People like to share music. The Internet makes it so easy. They have to do something to change this business model of theirs."

Web site lets fans sing with the King

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—So you fancy yourself a singer, eh ... alone, in your car, with the windows up, when no one's looking.

Well, now you can test your pipes against Martina McBride and Elvis Presley in private, and if you like what you hear, you can share them with your friends via email.

As a promotion for "Elvis Presley Christmas Duets" album, Sony BMG Music Entertainment has created a Web site that allows you to record "Blue Christmas" as a duet with Presley, singing McBride's part from the album.

The site, <http://www.singwiththeking.com>, provides a phone number and access code so you can belt out your lines over the phone. If you're pleased with the recording, you can send it in a Christmas card.



In this undated file photo singer and actor Elvis Presley is shown.

Or, if you discover you sound more like Alvin and the Chipmunks than Presley and McBride, you can send the album version of the song instead.

The whole thing is free.

"Someone in our digital

area came up with the concept," said JJ Rosen, executive vice president of Sony BMG Music Entertainment's Commercial Music Group. "It fits the duets concept of the album so well."

Because the campaign leans heavily on technology, Rosen said it brings Presley and his music to a younger generation. "We're always trying to keep the Elvis brand alive."

The site launched Dec. 5 and has drawn 30,000 people from nine countries. It's scheduled to end sometime in January.

The promotion has been successful enough that Sony plans a similar one for Mariah Carey's upcoming release "The Ballads" for Valentine's Day.

Given Carey's vocal range, it could take some serious chops to keep up.

"Dreamlover" anyone?



In this Nov. 14, 2008 file photo, heiress Paris Hilton attends the Fontainebleau Miami Beach Hotel grand opening party in Miami Beach, Fla.

No charges for Garrett in incident with paparazzo

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Prosecutors say Brad Garrett was provoked into pushing a paparazzo and charges won't be pressed. The Emmy-winning actor was shown pushing a man with a video camera and challenging him to a fight in a video posted last month on celebrity gossip site TMZ.com. The photographer claimed Garrett broke his camera, but continued to hold it up as if he was still shooting.

The confrontation occurred outside a restaurant in West Hollywood. The former "Everybody Loves Raymond" actor, who more recently starred in the Fox sitcom "Til Death,"



In this May 15, 2008 file photo, actor Brad Garrett arrives at the Fox Upfront after party at Wollman Rink in Central Park in New York.

was not arrested.

A charge evaluation report released Friday by the Los Angeles County district attorney's office says the paparazzo used "hostile and derogatory language" to try to provoke a violent outburst.

The report states that the 48-year-old Garrett pushing the photographer amounted to minimal contact and "the interests of justice" do not support pursuing a misdemeanor battery charge.

Oprah Winfrey named PETA's 'Person of the Year'

CHICAGO (AP)—Animal-rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has named Oprah Winfrey its "Person of the Year."

PETA President Ingrid E. Newkirk says Friday that Winfrey has used her "powerful voice to defend those without one."

Norfolk, Va.-based PETA says the group will send Winfrey an award plaque and a letter of appreciation.

Winfrey's Chicago-based Harpo Productions says the talk show host is on hiatus and not available for comment.

Previous winners of the PETA award include U.S. Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia in 2007 and the founders of the San Francisco-based cleaning product company Method in 2006.

Police: Hilton's home burglarized, jewelry missing

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles police are investigating a burglary at Paris Hilton's home they say left her bedroom ransacked and about \$2 million in jewelry missing.

Los Angeles police Officer Julianne Sohn said the break-in occurred around 5 a.m. Friday at Hilton's home in the Sherman Oaks area of Los Angeles. Sohn says detectives report that a man wearing a hooded sweatshirt and gloves broke in through the home's front

door and ransacked Hilton's bedroom.

Hilton was not at home at the time. She had been photographed the previous night at several LA nightspots.

Hilton's publicist, Elliot Mintz, said he had no information to release Friday afternoon.

Angie Harmon, Jason Sehorn welcome their third daughter

NEW YORK (AP)—Angie Harmon and husband Jason Sehorn have welcomed their third daughter.

Emery Hope Sehorn was born Thursday, said Harmon's publicist, Nicole Perna.

The 36-year-old actress and 37-year-old former National

Football League player were married in 2001 and have two daughters, 5-year-old Finley and 3-year-old Avery.

Harmon's TV credits include "Law & Order" and "Women's Murder Club." Sehorn played for the New York Giants and the St. Louis Rams.



In this July 21, 2007 file photo, actress Angie Harmon, right, and husband Jason Sehorn pose on the press line at the DesignCare 2007 benefit fundraiser in Malibu, Calif.

Singer's death prompts new jail drug policy

CLEVELAND (AP)—The death of R&B singer Sean Levert in Cleveland has led to a proposed new policy that provides more flexibility in giving inmates their anti-anxiety medication.

The member of the 1980s R&B trio LeVert and son of

lead O'Jays singer Eddie Levert died March 30 after becoming ill at the Cuyahoga County jail in Cleveland.

The jail administrator and a jail doctor proposed the change to allow inmates to get their prescribed medication as soon as their prescriptions are verified.

Wife's casual work ethic angers her diligent husband

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I work 5 1/2 days a week (46 hours) with no benefits. I can't afford to miss a day because, on the rare occasion that I must, I don't get paid.

My wife, "Kelly," misses work frequently because she is "sick," "tired," etc. She is in the same boat as I am—no work, no pay. Kelly knows how tight finances are and how much I hate having to work almost six days with no time off. But she still misses work and treats it like it's no big deal. She says she understands our situation.

I would like to go back to school and get my degree, but I'm afraid to rely on Kelly to pay the bills while I'm in school. I am so frustrated with my wife because of her work ethic that I feel like exploding and screaming at her. How should I handle this situation?

HARD-WORKING TEXAN

DEAR HARD-WORKING: In the difficult economic environment we're experiencing, many companies are taking a hard look at their expenses and scaling back. Among the ways they are doing this is by laying off employees. Your wife is playing "chicken" with her job. It should not be necessary to scream at her—just remind her what a fix you will both be in if she should become unemployed.

It might be wise for you to postpone furthering your education until the economy—and your finances—are more stable.

DEAR ABBY: I am 13 and in seventh grade. I sit with a group of nice people at lunch, except for one. "Grady" insults us, cries, yells at us for minor things, and has come right out and said he sits with us only because he likes to annoy us. Once, he started crying on purpose so we would feel bad and sit with him.

We have tried moving to a different table, ignoring him and being unpleasant so he wouldn't want to sit with us. Most of us have known Grady all through grade school, and we have had enough of his crying and yelling at us for no reason. We just want our space. Do you have any suggestions on how to get Grady to leave us alone? Most of us have classes with him, so avoiding him is not an option.

WANTS SOME QUIET TIME

DEAR WANTS: Grady may be immature for his age, or he may have emotional problems. If you haven't already done so, bring his behavior to the attention of a teacher or a counselor at school. You have described a child who has serious difficulty fitting in, but with counseling from an adult he may be able to adopt more appropriate behavior.

DEAR ABBY: My mother passed away 26 years ago. After her funeral, I gave her diamond engagement ring to my daughter, "Emma." Since then Emma has had two husbands and two more diamond rings, plus several others with various gemstones to match outfits. As far as I know, she has never worn my mother's ring.

I would like to spend my last years honoring my mother by wearing her ring. I am now 82. It would, of course, be returned to Emma when I die. Would it be all right to ask for that privilege?

SENTIMENTAL IN COLUMBIA, S.C.

DEAR SENTIMENTAL: Of course it would be all right to ask. However, bear in mind that when you gave your daughter your mother's ring, it became hers to do with as she wished. Her response to your query will tell you volumes about the daughter you raised.

TO MY JEWISH READERS: Allow me to wish all of you a happy Festival of Lights!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



Garfield®



By Jim Davis



Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

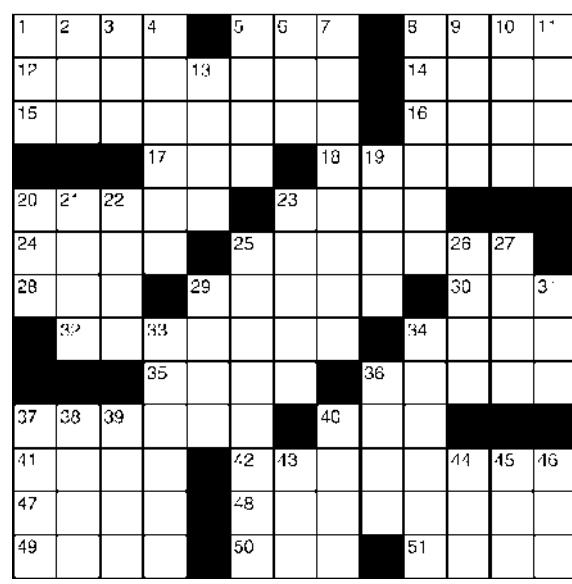


CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

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18	Passenger's	or	8	29 British	prep	prep	prep
19	confiner	Lewis	9	prep	school	school	school
20	Loony	48 Cuba,	11	31 Auct on	off	off	off
21	17 That	Jamaica,	12	offer	33 Fit for	use as	use as
22	man's	etc.	13	intruders	34	farm-	farm-
23	Wind	49 Advertise	14	Women"	35	land	land
24	musician	greatly	15	woman	36	Con	Con
25	Pains'	50 Red or	16	support	37	Apiece	Apiece
26	mates	Black	17	Wading	38	Picture	Picture
27	From the	51 Collections	18	bird	39	of	of
28	start		19	"Little	40	health?	health?
29	Duo		20	Women"	41	Rainout	Rainout
30	Compulsive		21	woman	42	cover	cover
31	cleaner		22		43	Information	Information
32	Bygone				44	Away	Away
33	days,				45	from	from
34	once				46	WSW	WSW
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36	planet					product	
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40	shop					to lower	
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Saturday's answer 12-22



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ or y) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rob-in Gibb, 59; Steve Garvey, 60; Diane Sawyer, 63; Barbara Billingsley, 93

Happy Birthday: You can secure your position financially and professionally by staying on top of your investments and sticking to conservative alternatives. Buying and selling big ticket items or property will help you get things back on track. Reassess your relationships and consider who's costing you too much emotionally or financially. Be secretive about your intentions concerning emotional issues. Your numbers are 6, 10, 16, 21, 30, 35, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Do whatever you can to push forward with a partnership or to protect your interests from someone who may want to take advantage of you. Don't be fooled by anyone offering too many compliments. Look at facts and figures. **★★★**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): As long as you keep things straight when it comes to personal matters or relationships, you can achieve whatever you set out to do. Talks will help clear matters up one way or another. Travel if it will secure a deal. **★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Stay focused on what you are trying to accomplish. If you let your emotions get involved in your business affairs, it will backfire on you. An energetic, innovative approach will be what grabs attention. **★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Changes are heading your way so take advantage of every opportunity to promote your tal-

ent, a project or an investment. Talks will lead to some great ideas but question anyone who wants to partner with you. **★★★★★**

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't let a love relationship get you down. A business opportunity that you've been trying to get off the ground shows potential if you can spread the word among associates. Get out and network. **★★**

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Last-minute shopping or talking to someone about your future intentions will both pay off in terms of what you achieve. You will be the driving force at home that brings family together and makes this time of year special for everyone. **★★★**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't take things to heart. Everyone around you is overreacting and stressed out. Do your best to help out by relying on your creative imagination to come up with workable solutions. Love is on the rise. **★★**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Emotions will be high and tempers short if you don't pay close attention to the needs of the ones with whom you are most involved. A chance to talk to someone with experience will help you with changes you need to make. Don't neglect the one you love. **★★**

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): A personal relationship is likely to run into trouble if you aren't prepared to make the next move. Changes at home will occur if you don't follow through with a promise made a long time ago. Tidy up loose ends at work. **★★★**

Birthday Baby: You are steadfast, serious-minded and able to take on any challenge. You are innovative and intuitive regarding money. You have the potential to lead.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can make some major headway today if you act fast. The better equipped you are for the holiday season and the more efficient your budget for the upcoming months, the happier you will feel. **★★★★**

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't let anyone talk you into something you aren't sure about. Purchasing something for someone else can turn into a chore. Before hitting the stores, have a good list and a backup plan. **★★**

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You mustn't be fooled into thinking you are getting one thing when in truth you are not. Ask questions and be prepared to walk away and look elsewhere if need be. A partnership can form that will lead to a brighter future. **★★★★**

Birthday Baby: You are steadfast, serious-minded and able to take on any challenge. You are innovative and intuitive regarding money. You have the potential to lead.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle

based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

1	2	5			8		
3			6	9	7	2	5
6			5		1		
	8	3		9			
	9		7		5		
		2		8	6		
3			6			8	
4	5	7	1	8		2	
6			1	3	7		

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	1	9	2	7	6	8	4
6	4	2	1	8	3	7	5
3	7	8	4	9	5	2	6
4	3	1	9	5	2	6	8
8	6	5	7	1	4	9	3
9	2	7	3	6	8	4	1
1	8	6	5	2	7	3	9
7	5	4	6	3	9	1	2
2	9	3	8	4	1	5	7

Difficulty Level: ****

12/22

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even, backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

WYNN LAS VEGAS

E	Y	F	D	R	E	A	M	S	I	U	O	L	S	P
V	R	D	I	N	E	T	N	O	T	T	I	U	V	A
E	U	O	S	V	T	R	I	C	A	R	S	K	S	G
R	X	M	T	A	E	E	L	N	O	R	I	P	T	A
E	U	U	R	S	L	S								

Crawford scores 50 points in Warriors' win



CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Jamal Crawford scored 50 points to help the undermanned Golden State beat the Charlotte Bobcats 110-103 on Saturday night, giving Warriors coach Don Nelson a win in his first game with a new coaching strategy.

A night after Nelson announced he would no longer have anything to do with the Warriors' NBA-worst defense, assistant Keith Smart handled that part of the game, while Crawford handled the offense—and then some.

In his best game since being acquired from New York last month, Crawford was 14-of-26 from the field, 5-of-8 from 3-point range and made 17 of 18 free throws. He was two points shy of his career high.

Kelenna Azubuike added 21 points and the Warriors snapped a five-game losing streak with Nelson and Smart co-coaching the team.

Golden State played again without top scorers Corey Maggette (hamstring) and Stephen Jackson (hand), who is not expected to return until Friday. Crawford more than made up for it.

Gerald Wallace scored 26 points, and Raja Bell added 21 for the Bobcats, who couldn't build off their best game of the season a night earlier and failed to win three in a row for the first time this season.

The Bobcats cut a 12-point deficit to 95-88 on Raymond Felton's 3-pointer with 4:53 left. Crawford responded with a 3-pointer on the next possession, then later added two free throws and a mid-range jumper.

The Bobcats, who shot a franchise-best 66 percent in a blowout win Friday at Memphis, struggled to have the same presence inside.

Boris Diaw got into foul trouble and was held to 11 points. Emeka Okafor had 12 points and 13 rebounds, but air-balled a free throw with his team down by five with 28.3 seconds left.

But the Bobcats' biggest problem was defending Crawford, while the Warriors' new defensive strategy seemed to work OK.

Nelson said he decided Friday afternoon to turn over the defensive responsibilities to Smart, explaining after Friday's loss to Atlanta that he's not tough enough and that "I'm getting soft as I get older."

The 68-year-old Nelson didn't inform the players of the move until before Saturday's game, which the Warriors entered allowing 112.2 points per



Golden State Warriors' Jamal Crawford (6) drives on Charlotte Bobcats guard Gerald Wallace (3) during the first half of the Warriors' 110-103 win in an NBA basketball game in Charlotte, N.C., Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008.

game, most in the league.

Smart took an active role during the game, getting out of his seat and shouting instructions when Charlotte had the ball. They each had chairs in the huddle during time-outs, and several times Smart spoke before Nelson.

"Before, he had to wait until I was done," Nelson said before the game. "Now, he and I can both talk whenever we want. It gives him more authority in the huddle."

It wasn't the only unorthodox move by Nelson. He made a late change and started Brandan Wright, a night after he scored a career-high 19 points against the Hawks. Then Wright, who was traded by Charlotte to the Warriors moments after he was drafted last year, missed his first three shots and committed three fouls in five minutes.

Wright played only 3 minutes the rest of the night and didn't score. Rookie Anthony Randolph, after not getting off the bench against the Hawks, scored two points in seven minutes.

It didn't matter with Crawford schooling whomever guarded him. He beat Felton off the dribble and hit 3-pointers over Bell. His offbalance 3

over Felton put Golden State ahead 84-72 late in the third quarter.

Magic 106, Lakers 103

At Orlando, Florida, Jameer Nelson had 27 points, and Orlando overcame Kobe Bryant's season-high 41 points for Los Angeles.

Bryant missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer that would have forced overtime.

Rashard Lewis added 22 points for the Magic in their sixth straight home victory, and Dwight Howard had 18 in his second game back from a knee injury.

Pacers 95, 76ers 94

At Philadelphia, T.J. Ford hit a 15-foot jumper with 3.9 seconds left and finished with 25 points for short-handed Indiana.

The Pacers dressed just nine players. For the second straight game, Indiana was without starters Troy Murphy, Marquis Daniels and Danny Granger, out with viral infections. The Pacers also were missing Maceo Baston (lower-back strain).

Andre Iguodala had 26 points for Philadelphia in its first loss in four games under new coach Tony DiLeo. Andre Miller had 14 points, 12 assists

and 10 rebounds.

Rockets 109, Timberwolves 102

At Minneapolis, Tracy McGrady scored 23 points and Houston made 12 3-pointers to hand Minnesota its 12th straight loss, matching the team's longest losing streak since 1994.

Aaron Brooks had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets, who have won three in a row and seven of their last nine.

Al Jefferson had 34 points, 13 rebounds and three blocks for Minnesota.

Hornets 99, Kings 90

At New Orleans, Chris Paul had 34 points, nine assists and a season-high eight steals, and New Orleans won for the 11th time in 13 games.

Reserve James Posey added 19 points, and David West had 12. John Salmons scored 26 points, and Francisco Garcia added 16 for Sacramento.

Heat 106, Nets 103

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Dwyane Wade matched his season high with 43 points, scoring 12 of Miami's final 14 points.

Wade put Miami ahead to stay with a reverse layup with 1:58 remaining for a 98-97 lead. Udonis Haslem sealed the win with a jumper from the corner with 14.7 seconds left that put the Heat up by 5.

Brook Lopez led New Jersey with 22 points and 13 rebounds.

Spurs 107, Raptors 97

At San Antonio, Tony Parker had 24 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds, and San Antonio matched a franchise record with 16 3-pointers.

Tim Duncan scored 19 points, and Roger Mason had 16.

Jermaine O'Neal led Toronto with 24 points. The Raptors have lost five straight for the second time this season to drop to 10-14.

Bulls 106, Jazz 98

At Chicago, Ben Gordon scored 26 points, and Derrick Rose had 10 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter for Chicago.

The Bulls have won five straight home games and are 10-3 at the United Center.

Mehmet Okur had 23 points and 13 rebounds for Utah, and Paul Millsap added 22 points and 10 rebounds.

Bucks 119, Clippers 85

At Milwaukee, Richard Jefferson scored

22 points, and Luke Ridnour added 18 for Milwaukee in its fourth victory in five games.

Al Thornton scored 20 points for Los Angeles in its worst loss of the season. The Clippers were playing their fourth road game in five nights.

Suns 108, Nuggets 101

At Phoenix, Steve Nash scored eight straight points in the final 3 minutes as Phoenix beat Denver for the eighth straight time at home.

Nash finished with 16 points and 11 assists. Amare Stoudemire led the Suns with 27 points and 10 rebounds—his 10th game in a row with at least 20 points. Shaquille O'Neal had 19 points and nine rebounds, Jason Richardson also scored 19.

Grant Hill did a strong job on Carmelo Anthony, holding the Nuggets' leading scorer to 10 points—11 below his average. Reserve JR Smith topped the Nuggets with 23 points, and Nene added 20 points and 15 rebounds.

Report: LeBron James may sign extension early

CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James said he'll consider signing an extension with the Cleveland Cavaliers this summer, well before he enters the free-agent market in 2010.

"You play out the season of course; I will consider it," James told The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer before the team practiced in Denver on Saturday. "The direction we are headed is everything I expected and more."

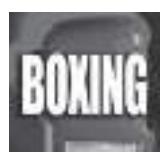
James, under contract for two more seasons, can hit the free-agent market on July 1, 2010. There has long been speculation James will eventually end up in one of the NBA's larger markets—particularly with the New York Knicks.

The Cavaliers (22-4) have the second-best record in the NBA.

"I definitely want to keep an open mind, I will look at everything," James said. "(The extension) is a good point. I think me and my group have pretty much made good decisions so far and we'll look at the options and go from there."

James signed a three-year, \$43 million deal with the Cavaliers in 2006. The deal includes a player option for 2010-11 worth \$17.4 million.

Valuev stops Holyfield by majority decision



ZURICH, Switzerland (AP)—Nikolai Valuev likely ended Evander Holyfield's last chance at winning a fifth heavyweight title, narrowly defending his WBA title by majority decision on Saturday night.

The 46-year-old American, attempting to become the oldest heavyweight to win a major belt, started the fight by moving around the ring to neutralize Valuev's long reach advantage.

The 7-foot Russian, the tallest and heaviest champion ever, struggled to close down Holyfield early but began asserting his jab as Holyfield tired.

One judge scored the bout a draw, while the others had Valuev winning 116-112 and 115-114.

"Of course I am disappointed," Holyfield said. "I thought I had done enough to get the win. Now I have to go home and think about my future."

Holyfield (42-10-2) had not fought since losing a one-sided decision to then-WBO champion Sultan Ibragimov over a year ago, and was much criticized for this latest comeback attempt. Some critics suggested he was putting his health at risk by fighting at such an advanced age.

Still, the "Real Deal" appeared in great shape for the fight and was never

seriously hurt by Valuev (51-1), who has avoided the top heavyweights and did little to improve his standing in the division. He was vulnerable to Holyfield's right hooks, many of which landed, even if the Russian also was never stunned.

"He made me work very hard for the win," said Valuev, the overwhelming favorite and underwhelming winner. "Holyfield was unbelievable with his speed. The fight was fought at a great tempo for the whole 12 rounds."

Later rounds were largely uneventful, with the Atlanta native dancing and looking for the rare opportunity to attack in combinations. The Rus-

sian, who carried a weight advantage of almost 100 pounds, planted himself in the center of the ring and rarely unleashed power punches.

"His hands are not as slow as everyone thinks they are," Holyfield said.

For Valuev, it was the biggest win on a weak resume. He has so far refused to fight either of the Klitschko brothers, who hold the other major belts and are considered the top two heavyweights in the world.

Holyfield has refused to say if he would retire should he lose or draw against Valuev. Struggling with financial problems, Holyfield may try to use the better-than-expected result to score a big payday against another champion or Riddick Bowe,

who has recently made a similarly worrisome comeback.

Holyfield won one of three epic battles against Bowe in the 1990s, when he beat Buster Douglas, George Foreman and Mike Tyson twice to become a dominating figure in the sport.

This fight was put on in front of 12,500 largely pro-Holyfield fans in Zurich's Hallenstadion. Holyfield entered to a standing ovation, wearing a red robe fit for a king.

Valuev was booed, and there were even scattered whistles while the Russian national anthem played. The fans similarly showed their displeasure when the judges' scorecards were read.

Ravens beat Cowboys in Texas Stadium finale

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Dallas Cowboys fans and Hall of Famers came early and stayed late, making sure they savored every bit of the 313th and last game at Texas Stadium.

The Baltimore Ravens will remember it fondly, too.

Willis McGahee ran 77 yards for a lead-stretching touchdown when things got tight late in the fourth quarter, then Le'Ron McClain topped that by going 83 yards for the real victory-clinching touchdown with 1:18 left, sending the Ravens past the Cowboys 33-24 Saturday night in a game both teams needed to boost their playoff chances.

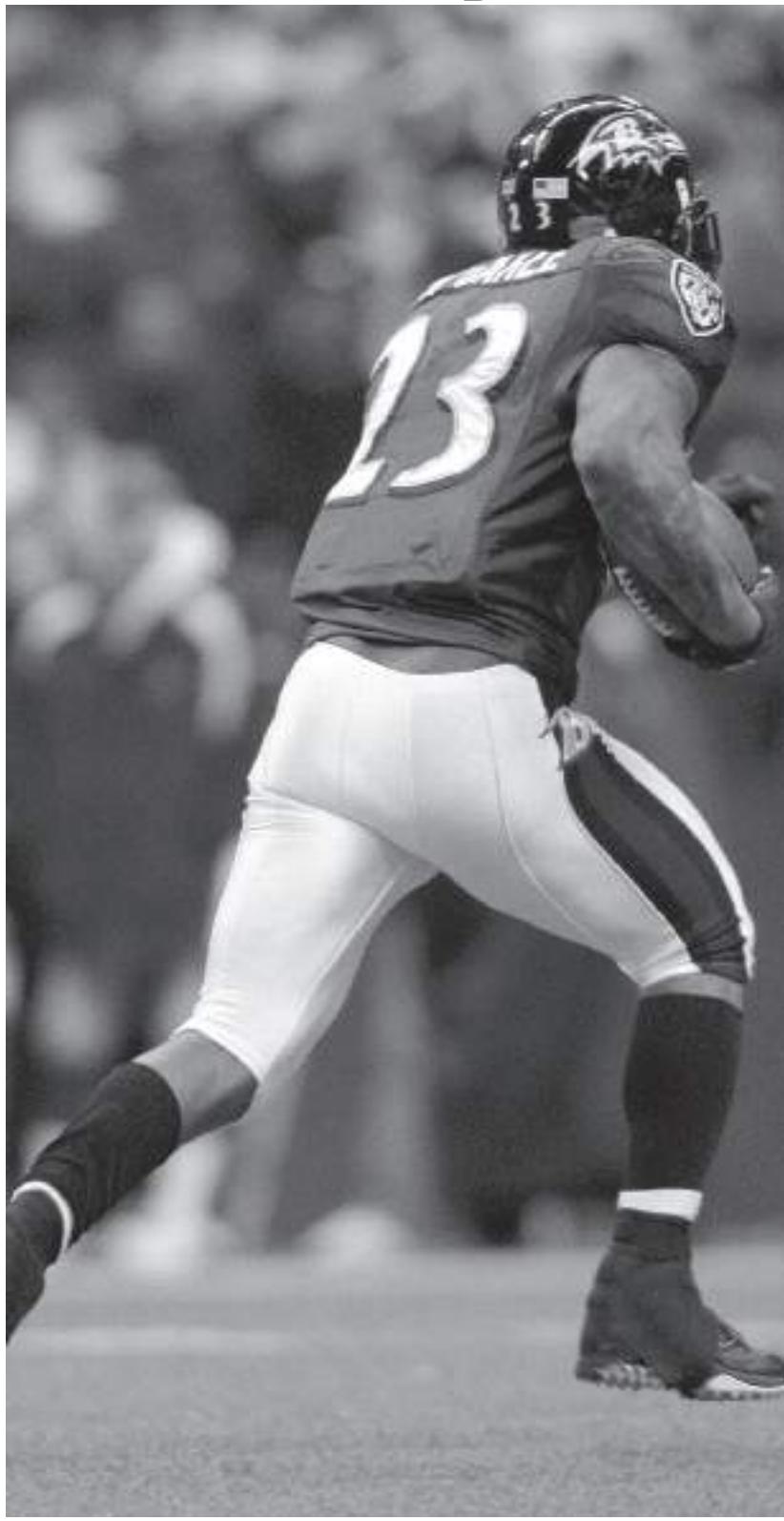
Baltimore led 19-10 midway through the fourth quarter behind four field goals from Matt Stover, who sold programs outside the stadium as a kid growing up in the area, and a touchdown pass from Joe Flacco to Derrick Mason.

Tony Romo threw touchdown passes to Terrell Owens and Jason Witten over the last 3:36, each putting Dallas within two points. But the Ravens answered both with one-play scoring drives, both coming on runs up the middle against a defense that had done a great job against the run all night. When Romo's final drive ended on downs, fans began to boo. More boos followed when Flacco took a knee and time ran out.

Baltimore (10-6) bounced back from a controversial last-minute loss to Pittsburgh to win for the fourth time in five games. With only the AFC's sixth seed up for grabs, the Ravens are guaranteed of being in the mix when the play Jacksonville at home next weekend.

Baltimore Ravens running back Willis McGahee (23) runs 77 yards for a touchdown against the Dallas Cowboys in the fourth quarter of their NFL football game, Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008, in Irving, Texas.

AP



Epstein, Francona silent on pursuit of Teixeira

BOSTON (AP)—Red Sox general manager Theo Epstein was back at the airport Friday as part of the team's announcement of a new partnership—not with Mark Teixeira.

Epstein flew back from Texas where he, team owner John Henry and president Larry Lucchino met Thursday with the free agent first baseman and his agent, Scott Boras. Henry said that after hearing about "other offers" to Teixeira, the Red Sox "are not going to be a factor" in acquiring him.

Just 15 hours after Henry sent that e-mail, Epstein and Boston manager Terry Francona did not speak at a news conference at Logan Airport, which lasted about 15 minutes. Another team official announced that JetBlue was the official airline of the Red Sox.

Epstein and Francona were escorted away as the news conference was ending.

Henry did not respond to an e-mail Friday asking if the Red Sox might get back in the bidding or if there was any way he could be sure that Teixeira received the offers from other teams that he said Boras mentioned.

By referring to "other offers," Henry could be calling a bluff. Boras also represented former Red Sox center fielder

Johnny Damon and current Boston pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka.

Damon signed with the New York Yankees in 2005 after Red Sox officials apparently refused to believe that the offer from their archrivals was real. Matsuzaka signed with Boston after team officials met with him and Boras in Newport Beach, Calif., in December 2006 then went to the airport and said they would be leaving for Boston with or without Matsuzaka. The pitcher later showed up for the flight.

The Baltimore Orioles also have pursued Teixeira, a native of nearby Annapolis, Md. Team president Andy MacPhail said in a text message to The Associated Press on Friday that there was "nothing new."

The Los Angeles Angels obtained Teixeira from the Atlanta Braves and are trying to keep him.

"We made our offer of eight years several days ago. And there has been no change since that time," Angels spokesman Tim Mead said.

The prize free agent also has drawn interest from the Washington Nationals and met before the winter meetings with Yankees general manager Brian Cashman. Those meetings in Las Vegas ended on Dec. 11. Offi-

cials of the Orioles and Angels said Boras had not been in contact with them on Thursday.

Boras did meet with the Red Sox officials then.

"We met with Mr. Teixeira and were very much impressed with him," Henry said in his e-mail after the meeting. "After hearing about his other offers, however, it seems clear that we are not going to be a factor."

Henry has not said what the Red Sox offered but has expressed reservations about signing a contract of more than eight years.

"The Boston ownership was kind enough to request and travel to meet with Mark Teixeira," Boras said in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "While it was a very positive meeting, Mark was candid and advised he is in the process of making a decision and is now attempting to eliminate teams."

Early Friday afternoon, with snow falling outside the windows behind the news conference, Sam Kennedy, executive vice president/chief sales and marketing officer of the Red Sox, announced the airline partnership.

"Nothing is more important than this announcement," he said, "and we will be making no (other) announcement, at least in the next 15 minutes."

Baltimore goes into Sunday with a half-game lead over three AFC East teams that are 9-5, one of which will get in by winning the division.

Dallas (9-6) lost for the second time in three weeks. While they can still get an NFC wild-card berth, this loss makes it tougher. They actually had several ways to clinch Sunday if they could've won this game. Now they'll go to Philadelphia next Sunday needing a win and, perhaps, some help. Dallas' loss clinched a playoff spot for the Carolina Panthers.

Despite the importance of this game, much of the emotion came from this being the 313th and final game played under the hole in the roof. The Cowboys finished 213-100 in regular-season and postseason games at the home they moved into in 1971, going 6-2 this season.

It was during the 37 seasons here that Dallas blossomed into "America's Team," winning five Super Bowls and filling the Hall of Fame with stars like Bob Lilly, Roger Staubach, Tony Dorsett and Michael Irvin—all of whom were among the roughly 100 former players welcomed back for a postgame ceremony.

The celebrating began when the stadium parking lots opened an hour early. Team owner Jerry Jones and his family took dozens of pictures at the midfield star before fans were let in, and there were tributes throughout the game. Players also wore a patch on their jerseys commemorating the farewell.

Flacco was 17-of-25 for 149 yards and the touchdown, which was set up by a 9-yard run by punter-holder Sam Koch on a fake field goal. Although he was sacked six times and lost a fumble,

his efficiency helped the Ravens turn an early 7-0 deficit into a 16-7 lead late in the third quarter.

Romo was 24-of-45 for 252 yards and two touchdowns, with two first-half interceptions. Ed Reed had both, tying him for the NFL lead with seven.

Romo was out of sync the first three quarters, more because of the Ravens' swarming defense than a lingering back injury. He actually moved pretty well but had to move a lot to avoid whichever defender came roaming at him practically every time he threw. Late in the third quarter, Dallas had more punts (six) than first downs (five).

Witten and Owens each caught five passes, Witten's going for 87 yards—despite a sprained left knee that forced him to drop to the sideline after his touchdown—and Owens' went for 63 yards.

Rookie Tashard Choice started over injured Marion Barber and ran for 90 yards, among the most all season against Baltimore. His 2-yard touchdown in the first quarter was only the fourth on the ground all season against the Ravens. It was set up by linebacker DeMarcus Ware's NFL-best 20th sack, which also produced Flacco's fumble.

The Cowboys allowed only around 100 yards rushing before the two big, late runs. McLain finished with 22 carries for 139 yards and McGahee had eight carries for 108 yards.

This was the Ravens' first game here and, thus, they'll finish 1-0 at Texas Stadium. The Oakland-Los Angeles Raiders went 3-0 and are the only other NFL team not to lose under the hole in the roof.

It's official: Rafael Furcal finalizes deal with Dodgers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Shortstop Rafael Furcal finalized his three-year contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers on Friday. Furcal agreed to terms of a contract worth at least \$30 million with the Dodgers two days earlier, prompting the Atlanta Braves to claim the 31-year-old switch hitter reneged on a deal with them.

"Raffy has proven to be a very important player for us over the last three seasons," Dodgers general manager Ned Colletti said in a statement issued late Friday. "He sets a great example with his enthusiasm and passion for the game and his teammates."

Furcal hit .357 with five homers and 16 RBIs last season, but was limited to 36 games and 143 at-bats by back problems. He had back surgery July 3 and was sidelined until the season's final week, but started each of the Dodgers' eight postseason games, hitting .258 with one homer, three RBIs and nine runs scored.

"You can't overestimate Raffy's value to the team," Dodgers manager Joe Torre said. "He brings so much more to the table than just his ability to play the game. The players feed off his energy and I think he's an integral piece of the puzzle."

I look forward to having that leadership in a Dodger uniform for the next several years."

Braves president John Schuerholz has vowed to never again do business

with Furcal's agents, whom Schuerholz accused in a newspaper interview of conducting "despicable" dealings with the team.

Schuerholz and Braves general manager Frank Wren were quoted as saying the Wasserman Media Group, headed by Arn Tellem, negotiated dishonestly by taking the team's signed terms of agreement sheet for Furcal to the Dodgers. Wren said he believed the request by agent Paul Kinzer for a term sheet signed by the Braves late Monday meant an agreement had been reached.

"Having been in this business for 40-some years, I've never seen anybody treated like that," Schuerholz was quoted as saying in Friday's editions of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "The Atlanta Braves will no longer do business with that company—ever. I told Arn Tellem that we can't trust them to be honest and forthright. I told him that in all my years, I've never seen any (agency) act in such a despicable manner."

"It was disgusting and unprofessional. We're a proud organization, and we won't allow ourselves to be treated that way. I advised Arn Tellem that whatever players he represents, just scratch us off the list. Take the name of the Atlanta Braves off their speed dial. They can deal with the other 29 clubs, and we'll deal with the other hundred agents."

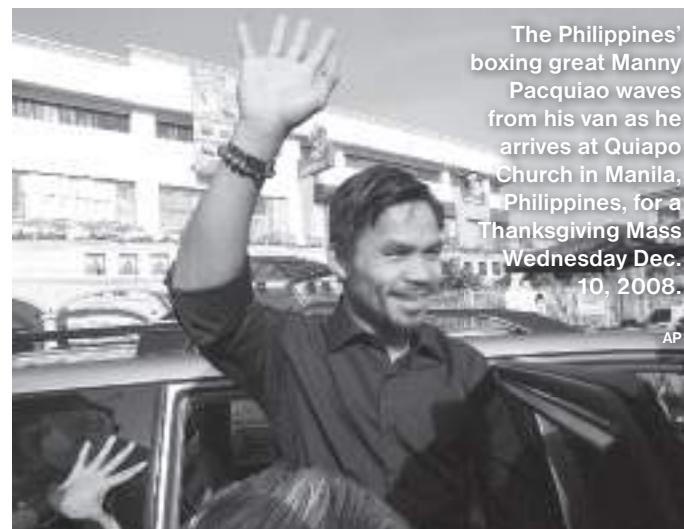
Hatton a tough customer for Pacman

BOXING
GEN. SANTOS CITY, Philippines—For Freddie Roach, British superstar Ricky Hatton offers a tough challenge to Filipino ring hero Manny Pacquiao.

The celebrated American trainer described Hatton as “dangerous” and should be handled with utmost care by Pacquiao if ever their showdown pushes through in May in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Roach’s reaction was in stark contrast to his confident stance when Pacquiao fought and beat Oscar De La Hoya in their Dream Match on Dec. 6, also in Las Vegas.

The 48-year-old Roach said Pacquiao should not be lulled into complacency by his easy eighth-round TKO victory over De La Hoya because Hatton will dish out a better performance.



The Philippines’ boxing great Manny Pacquiao waves from his van as he arrives at Quiapo Church in Manila, Philippines, for a Thanksgiving Mass Wednesday Dec. 10, 2008. AP

After attending Pacquiao’s lavish 30th birthday celebration here Wednesday, Roach flew back to Manila and was slated to proceed to Los Angeles last night.

This early, Roach is charting a plan on how to beat Hatton, who was also impressive in stopping Paulie Malignaggi in

their IBO light welterweight title fight last month.

According to Roach, Pacquiao needs to train for at least eight weeks at his Wild Card Gym in Hollywood to be in top shape for Hatton, who is also a slugger and puncher.

As to the fight strategy, Roach

bit in the final round with a net 70. Art recorded a 71 in the first round and closed out the tournament with another net 71.

Second to sixth placers in the Ace of the Aces event received gifts and cash prizes, while Demapan took home a glass trophy

during SGA’s Christmas Party at Charley’s Cabaret in Pacific Islands Club Friday.

Glass trophies were also given to the 12 monthly Ace winners, namely Mariano Fajardo (January), Joe I. Sablan (February), Ned Norita (March), Larry

Daniel fastbreak play with Ranola feeding Barbo, anew for an easy layup.

Going into the last minute of the game, Daniel was ahead, 85-76, and Tabora tried to cut the lead to seven, but he was called for an offensive foul while trying to penetrate inside.

In the ensuing play, Barbo was fouled by Wabinga and the former brought Daniel’s lead back to double digits after canning both charities, 87-76, with 53.4 seconds left on the clock.

Tabora ended his and Isaiah’s frustrating night with another error when he drove to the middle and drew two defenders on him before deciding

to kick the ball out to Tamayo, who was cutting from the wing and failed to catch the pass.

Daniel played in the title game without its main gunner—Elmer Eddelon. But the newly-minted champion had Mike Umali stepping up to fill the void left by Eddelon on Daniel’s offense.

Umali had a game-high 24 points waxing hot in the third quarter with 15 points and helping Daniel took a 67-54 lead midway in that canto after the game ended in a tie at halftime, 42-all. The Daniel point guard was later named Finals MVP, while Eddelon took the regular season MVP honors.

Three other Daniel players

feels that Pacquiao should use his footwork the way he did against De La Hoya and to stay off the ropes.

Roach also thinks Pacquiao should be extra careful if he intends to mix it up with Hatton because the Briton is a “tremendous body puncher.”

Negotiations are under way between Top Rank head honcho Bob Arum and the Hatton camp for the fight tentatively slated on May 2.

If ever, Pacquiao-Hatton is projected to rival Pacquiao-De La Hoya in terms of revenue and pay-per-view buys, considering Pacquiao’s tag as the world’s best pound-for-pound fighter and Hatton’s cult-like following back home.

Meanwhile, former world lightweight champion David Diaz said the road to ultimate glory for Pacquiao is to beat Floyd Mayweather Jr.

“He is the greatest fighter I know,” he said in interview with reporters during Pacquiao’s birthday bash.

“As a fan, I want Hatton for Manny,” he said. “But to lead him to the place of glory, he will have to fight Mayweather.” (PDI)

Christmas 8-Ball tomorrow

USS Peliliu Club will hold its annual Christmas 8-Ball Tournament tomorrow, Dec. 23, beginning at 7pm.

Prizes will be cash, trophies, wrapped gifts, and raffle giveaways. The entry fee will be \$15, so there will be cash prizes of \$120, \$75, and \$45 for a 16-player field.

“A lot of players asked for this after the Thanksgiving Marianas Turkey Shoot,” said Ken Phillips of USSP. “Christmas Eve is family time for a lot of people so we’re holding it on Tuesday.”

The regular Monday “friend-

ly” 8-ball tournament will be held this week for players who want the practice. The entry fee is only \$5 and it starts at 8pm. Both tournaments are double-elimination.

Phillips said the Monday 8-ball and Tuesday 9-ball tournaments last week had to be cancelled because the power was out until after 11pm. They will continue next week.

For more information about the Christmas Tournament or the regular 8- and 9-ball tournaments, please contact Rose or Ken Phillips at 233-1984. (USSP)

DEMAPAN

From Page 28

lady golfer prevailing in the tie-break and taking fifth place.

Frances had a net 72 in the first round and improved her game a

DANIEL

From Page 28

with a split free throw after a broken play from Isaiah, which saw Tabora spinning inside and losing the ball against the tight defense of Mike Umali.

After Barbo missed his second charity, Brendo Talania grabbed the offensive board, passed it to Ranola, who made a bounced pass to Barbo for an underneath basket deuce.

Tabora missed another attempt at the basket and although Isaiah took the rebound, it failed to score when Tamayo also muffed his triple resulting in a

finished in double figures with Ranola adding 18 and Barbo and Lauron chipping in 17 and 10 markers, respectively.

Tamayo led Isaiah’s losing cause hitting 19 points, while Wabinga contributed 18. Tabora nailed 17, but had only two points in the fourth period. Jun Pantaleon scored 15.

Daniel 92—Umali 24, Ranola 18, D. Barbo 17, Lauron 10, Talania 9, G. Barbo 7, Culala 4, De Leon 3.

Isaiah 76—Tamayo 19, Wabinga 18, Tabora 17, Pantaleon 15, Demapan 6.

Scoring by quarters: 17-23, 42-all, 69-62, 92-76.

Four and a half innings with the Legislature’s defense allowing no Hopwood runners reaching second base.

Third baseman Dennis Cabrera went 4-for-4 at bat scoring four runs and three RBIs.

Legislature snapped its two-game losing skid and gained its fifth win in eight games.

Hopwood remained winless after seven matches.

Beach Boys 19, CUC 6,

In the second game, the Beach Boys also had an easy win cruising past the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., 19-6.

B.J. Sablan made back-to-

back homers and scored four RBIs. He was 3-for-4 at the plate. Two other Beach Boys sluggers had one roundtripper apiece with rightfielder Max Kadiasang and centerfielder J.J. Suel hitting a two-run homer each in the second inning.

The Beach Boys now have a 6-1 record and share the No. 2 spot with the Commonwealth Ports Authority and Freedom Air.

Defending champion Department of Community and Cultural Affairs is leading the league with an immaculate 8-0 record.

CUC is at the bottom half of the team standings in the 20-squad field with its 2-6 slate.

Mendoza was also given a plaque of appreciation after his company—Traders Insurance—supported the past two stagings of the team tournament.

NMBF also gave certificates of participation to players who competed in the

junior division of the event, while the top two teams received trophies.

Brothers Manatsu and Kanata Omori took the championship trophy, while Ezekiel Macario and Jenine Savellano went home with the runner-up plum.

NMBF

From Page 28

teams—Bad Masters, Blue Powers, NetFighters, Dragon Shuttlers, and D’Bombers—each received a certificate

of participation.

Jerry Tan handed out the certificates to members of the five teams and also delivered a brief speech after he was awarded a plaque of appreciation for supporting the tournament.

Mendoza was also given a plaque of appreciation after his company—Traders Insurance—supported the past two stagings of the team tournament.

NMBF also gave certificates of participation to players who competed in the

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	25	2	.926	—
New Jersey	13	13	.500	11 1/2
Philadelphia	12	15	.444	13
New York	11	15	.423	13 1/2
Toronto	10	17	.370	15

Southeast Division

Orlando	21	6	.778	—
Atlanta	16	10	.615	4 1/2
Miami	14	12	.538	6 1/2
Charlotte	9	19	.321	12 1/2
Washington	4	20	.167	15 1/2

Central Division

Cleveland	22	4	.846	—
Detroit	14	10	.583	7
Chicago	13	14	.481	9 1/2
Milwaukee	13	16	.448	10 1/2
Indiana	10	17	.370	12 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	16	7	.696	—
Houston	18	9	.667	—
San Antonio	16	10	.615	1 1/2
Dallas	14	11	.560	3
Memphis	9	17	.346	8 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	17	10	.630	—
Portland	17	10	.630	—
Utah	17	12	.586	1
Minnesota	4	22	.154	12 1/2
Oklahoma City	3	24	.111	14

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	21	5	.808	—
Phoenix	16	11	.593	5 1/2
L.A. Clippers	8	19	.296</td	

The Week in Sports

Happy holidays indeed for week's finest

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Some athletes and teams in the CNMI will have a merry Christmas, others will not.

Members of Saipan Southern High School's junior varsity basketball are among those who have a reason to celebrate the holiday season after defending their title in the 2008-2009 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Basketball League.

Kagman High School's Ayuyus will have a not so merry Christmas after they were beaten by the Rays in the MISO caging finals, 84-63.

The Rays won last season's junior varsity division title after thrashing the Ayuyus, 115-102.

Joining the Rays in merrymaking this season were MMA fighters Kelvin 'The Big Hit' Fitial and Tara "The Tarantula" Namauleg, volleyball players Bruce Berline and Melody Matson, CNMI junior tennis players Thea Minor, Rafael Jones, Christian Miller, and Benjie Decena, and Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' men's softball team.

Fitial starred in Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation with a first round win over Reuben "The Booben" Quinata of Guam in the main event.

Namauleg made history when she defeated Jenipy "So-High La" Sambile in the CNMI's first ever MMA female fight

in Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation.

The pair of Berline and Matson downed the tandem of Mili Saiki and Russ Quinn in the championship match in the 2nd Annual Reverse Co-ed Grass Volleyball Tournament, 24-22.

Minor, Jones, and Miller are in New Zealand competing in tournaments. Two tournaments were completed with Minor winning two doubles crown and making two finals appearances in singles division, while Jones and Miller also made good account of themselves in New Zealand prevailing in a couple of matches.

The three CNMI netters were part of the ITF Pacific Oceania Team and are challenging players from Australia, New Zealand, and other island-nations in Oceania and the Pacific.

Decena was not included on the team, but he did well in a local tournament sweeping the men's 4.0 singles and doubles events in the 2008 Tinian Tennis Tournament at the Tinian Youth Center in San Jose.

The 2008 Inter Government/Business Softball League played its last game of the year Friday and defending champion DCCA became the only team in the 20-squad field to go undefeated as the league takes a holiday break.

DCCA is unbeaten in eight games following its 38-13 demolition of Commonwealth Ports Authority, which won its first six games before bowing to DCCA.

Others members of the sports community, especially those who are frequent visitors of the Oleai Sports Complex and its track and

field facility received a Christmas gift as early as May when construction of the grandstand started.

The Oleai Sports Complex grandstand and pathways were inaugurated Friday with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial leading the inauguration rites.

While the new facility is pleasing to the eye of residents and tourists alike, an old one—the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium—needs a major facelift especially since the CNMI is hosting the Oceania Basketball Tournament next year.

FIBA Oceania secretary general Steve Smith in an e-mail to *Saipan Tribune* said the Ada Gym is below international standards and the expectations of FIBA Oceania as far as hosting the Oceania caging is concerned.

CNMI as host will have until the end of this month to assure FIBA Oceania that a program is in place to address the problem or the Commonwealth might lose its hosting rights.

Triathlete Eli Torgeson will not be spending Christmas in the CNMI after leaving Saipan for good Saturday.

A frequent winner of running, biking, and triathlon events here, Torgeson returned to New Mexico after a 16-month stay in the Commonwealth.

After several postponements, the 2008-2009 BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League finally kicked off Thursday night with the Ol'Aces winning the opening game after an 81-76 triumph over the Docomo Hoopaholics.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
From left, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation corporate director Joshua Sasamoto, Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial lead the inauguration rites for the Oleai Sports Complex grandstand Friday.



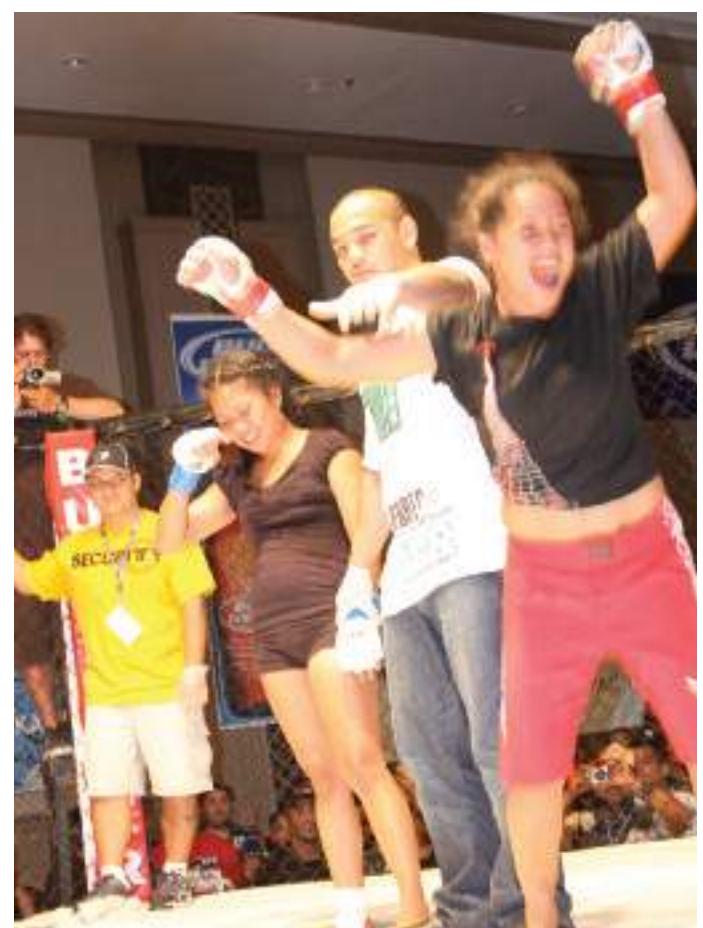
ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Docomo's Ryan Sanciangco, front, and Ol'Aces' Alex Lauron battle for the ball during the opening game in the Bud Cup caging Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Eli Torgeson in his first and last Mt. Tapochao Turkey Trot Run last month.



MARK RABAGO
Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial tries to extricate himself from a charging Reuben "The Booben" Quinata in the main event of last Dec 12's Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation at the Roya Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.



MARK RABAGO
Tara "The Tarantula" Namauleg screams in delight after she was declared winner in the historic first ever CNMI MMA female fight against Jenipy "So-High La" Sambile in Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation.



Crawford scores 50 points in Warriors' win
 Jamal Crawford scored 50 points to help the undermanned Golden State beat the Charlotte Bobcats 110-103 on Saturday night. **24**

Saipan Tribune Sports

28 MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Demapan takes SGA Ace of Aces title

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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 REPORTER

Joe Demapan showed consistency in the two-day Ace of Aces Tournament to top the Saipan Golfers Association's yearend event.

Demapan tallied a net 139 in the SGA Ace of the Aces Tournament after firing a net 69 in the first round of the event (Dec. 13) at Kingfisher Golf Links. He closed out with a net 79 in the second and final round (Dec. 14) at the Coral Ocean Point course.

Demapan was this year's November Ace and defeated 10 other monthly Ace winners and eight non-Ace winners for the coveted trophy.

Also shooting a 139 in two rounds was July Ace Nobert Sablan. Sablan was off to a good start, recording the lowest net in the first round with his 65 at Kingfisher. But he failed to tame the Aagingan Point course in the second round hitting a 74.



The former SGA president settled for second place, losing to Demapan in the scorecard playoffs.

There was a tie for third place between Tony Deleon Guerrero and SGA president Martin Sablan, but the former won the tiebreak.

Tony and Martin had identical scores of 141 in two rounds with the former nailing the second best score in the first round with a net 68 before struggling in the second round with a net 73.

Martin had a rough start hitting a 76 at Kingfisher, but he redeemed himself at COP with a second-round best net of 65.

Frances Sablan and September Ace Art I. Deleon Guerrero fired similar scores of 142 in two rounds with the

See DEMAPAN on Page 26

Joe Demapan hugs the SGA Ace of Aces perpetual trophy during the awards ceremony Saturday at Charley's Cabaret in PIC.

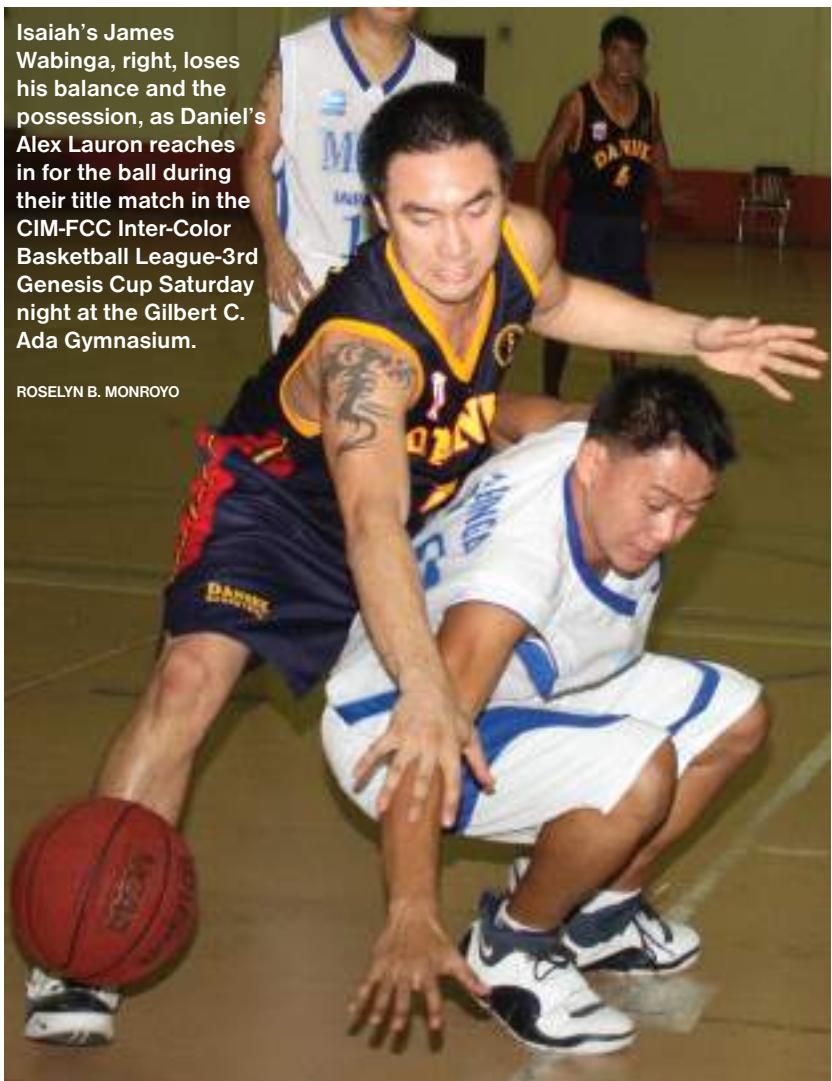
ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Daniel hoists 2008 Genesis Cup

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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 REPORTER

Daniel received an early Christmas gift



Isaiah's James Wabinga, right, loses his balance and the possession, as Daniel's Alex Lauron reaches in for the ball during their title match in the CIM-FCC Inter-Color Basketball League-3rd Genesis Cup Saturday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

when it claimed the championship trophy that eluded the team last year following a 92-76 win over Isaiah in the finals of the CIM-FCC Inter-Color Basketball

League-3rd Genesis Cup Saturday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Daniel won last year's pennant and was favored to take the championship against Jeremiah, but the latter pulled off a 105-84 upset to reign supreme in the 2007 edition of the annual league.

Against Isaiah in last weekend's finals, Daniel made sure the title would not slip from its hands, again shutting out the former in the last two minutes, 33 seconds of the fourth quarter and drawing straight baskets from Darwin Barbo to hoist the Genesis Cup crown.

After Isaiah cut Daniel's 11-point lead (80-69) to four, 76-80, on Jeremy Tamayo's seven straight points, Daniel coach Noel Puno pressed the panic button, with 2:33 left on the clock.

When play resumed, Tamayo stepped up to the free throw area, as he made his last basket while also drawing a foul from Sonny Ranola.

Tamayo missed the bonus shot, but James Wabinga collared the offensive board and was fouled on his way to the basket. Wabinga also had no luck from the 15-foot line miffing his two charities.

Isaiah spent the remaining two minutes of the game missing shots and committing errors with Jun Tabora mostly the culprit of those botched plays, while Barbo made crucial baskets that allowed Daniel to pull away.

Barbo started his barrage of points

See DANIEL on Page 26

Happy holidays indeed for a week's finest
 Members of Saipan Southern High School's junior varsity basketball are among those who have a reason to celebrate the holiday season. **27**



Jets slip past POI in softball league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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 REPORTER

Shorstop Cliff Sillil hit a one-run single to lift the Joeten Motors Jets to a 10-9 victory over Pacific Oriental, Inc, in the men's division of the 2008 Inter Government/Business Softball League Thursday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The Jets entered the bottom of the seventh inning behind by one, 8-9. Extra hitter Peter Sablan led off for the Jets and was beaten to first on a 6-3 putout play. Catcher Jess Taitano singled, while the Jets were called for the second out when Mel Tenorio flied out to centerfield.

With Taitano on third and with two outs, extra hitter Fred Kaipat doubled

See JETS on Page 26

NMBF fetes Traders tourney winners

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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 REPORTER



The Top 3 placers in the 2nd Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament received their trophies during the Northern Marianas Badminton Federation Christmas Party at Club V Thursday night.

The Green All-Stars were awarded with the championship trophy and each members of the team also went home with a miniature trophy.

The Green All-Stars were captained by Edwin Montoya. Their members include Lupe Sabino, Roding Domingo, Lea Estinopo, Gerry Balarao, Jojo Savellano, and Debra Fisher.

The team also received a cash prize of \$300 from Traders Insurance president Lito Mendoza, who also present-



The Green All-Stars pose with their trophies during the awards ceremony for the 2nd Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament at Club V Thursday night.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO